Operations and Maintenance Facility South

Coordination Plan

July 2023
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1 INTRODUCTION

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (Sound Transit) have developed this Coordination Plan in accordance with 23 United States Code (USC) §139(g)(1) and with the objective of identifying key coordination points with Tribes, agencies, and the public on the Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) South during the environmental review process. The OMF South would provide a facility in the South Corridor of the Sound Transit Link light rail system to receive, test, commission, store, maintain, and deploy vehicles for the system-wide light rail expansion. FTA is the lead federal agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Sound Transit is the lead agency under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

The purpose of this Coordination Plan is to support coordination with Tribes, agencies, and the public during the environmental review processes. The plan outlines activities that have taken place and will occur during the NEPA and SEPA environmental review process which began with SEPA early scoping in 2018. This plan will be updated as needed, reacting to feedback and project changes. As required by 23 USC §139(d)(8)(A), to the maximum extent practicable and consistent with federal law, all federal permits and reviews will rely on the EIS prepared for this project.

This plan includes the following sections:

1. Introduction
2. Project Description
3. Alternatives Development and Environmental Review Process
4. Tribal and Agency Engagement
5. Public Involvement
6. Bibliography
2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2016, voters approved funding for Sound Transit (ST3), Sound Transit’s regional system plan that includes 62 new miles of light rail that would contribute to a 116-mile regional system in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. It also includes two new operations and maintenance facilities (OMFs) in the North and South Corridors of the Link light rail system to support the expansion. The OMF South project would construct and operate a new OMF in the South Corridor of Sound Transit’s Link light rail system. The facility would be used to store, maintain, and deploy a minimum of 144 light rail vehicles (LRVs) for daily service. It would also provide facilities for vehicle storage, inspections, maintenance and repair, interior vehicle cleaning, and exterior vehicle washing. Additionally, the facility would receive, test, and commission new LRVs for the entire light rail system.

The OMF South would accommodate administrative and operational functions, such as serving as a report base for LRV operators. Included is a Maintenance of Way (MOW) building for maintenance and storage of spare parts for tracks, vehicle propulsion equipment, train signals, and other infrastructure, in addition to storage facilities for the entire Link light rail system. Other facility elements would include employee and visitor parking, operations staff offices, maintenance staff offices, dispatcher work stations, an employee report room, and areas with lockers, showers, and restrooms for both operators and maintenance personnel. Additionally, OMF South would need to have tracks connecting to a light rail line that will be operating when the facility is planned to open, which in southern King County is the Federal Way Link Extension (FWLE). The length and location of these connecting tracks varies by alternative.

Following an early scoping effort, followed by SEPA scoping, the Sound Transit Board of Directors identified three alternatives for study in the EIS in the cities of Federal Way and Kent. The alternatives are shown in Figure 1 and include the South 336th Street Alternative, South 344th Street Alternative, and the Midway Landfill Alternative. After publication of the SEPA Draft EIS, the Sound Transit Board of Directors identified the South 336th Street Alternative as the Preferred Alternative in December 2021.
Figure 1. Project Alternatives
2.1 Background

Since its creation in 1996 with voter approval of Sound Move, Sound Transit continues to move the region’s mass transit system forward. Figure 2 shows regional transit planning that has occurred over the years. Sound Move included implementation of the Central Link light rail system, which provided service between SeaTac, downtown Seattle, and the University of Washington. The second phase of investments, the Sound Transit 2 (ST2) System Plan, was subsequently approved by voters in 2008 and further extended light rail. It included light rail extensions from downtown Seattle to Bellevue and Redmond to the east and Northgate and Lynnwood to the north, and from SeaTac south to Federal Way.

![Figure 2. Regional Transit Planning](image)

In 2013, Sound Transit began planning for the next phase of investments to follow ST2. This work included updating Sound Transit’s Regional Transit Long-Range Plan (Sound Transit 2014) and associated environmental review under SEPA. Following system planning work to detail, evaluate, and prioritize the next round of regional transit system expansion, voters in 2016 authorized funding to extend the regional light rail system south to the Tacoma Dome as part of the ST3 Plan. The ST3 Plan extends light rail to West Seattle, Ballard, Issaquah, Kirkland, and Everett. The ST3 plan also includes operations and maintenance facilities in the North and South Corridors to support this expansion.

2.2 Purpose and Need

The Purpose and Need statement establishes the basis for developing and evaluating a range of reasonable alternatives for environmental review and assists with identifying a Preferred Alternative. The OMF South project supports Sound Transit’s Link light rail system expansion and the related increase in its light rail vehicle fleet and daily operations. The project includes measures to preserve and promote a healthy and sustainable environment by minimizing adverse impacts to people and the natural and built environments.

The purpose of the OMF South project is to:

- Provide a facility with the capacity to receive, test, commission, store, maintain, and deploy vehicles to support the intended level of service for the system-wide light rail expansion.
- Support efficient and reliable light rail service that minimizes system operating costs.
• Support and connect efficiently to the regional system and be technically and financially feasible to build, operate, and maintain, consistent with the Sound Transit 3 Plan and the Sound Transit Regional Transit Long-Range Plan.

The project is needed because:

• The current regional system lacks a facility with sufficient capacity and suitable location to support the efficient and reliable long-term operations for system-wide light rail expansion, including the next phase of expansion in King and Pierce counties.

• New light rail maintenance and storage capacity needs to be available with sufficient time to accept delivery of and commission new vehicles to meet expansion needs and to store existing vehicles while the new vehicles are tested and prepared.

The OMF South project would support a minimum of 144 LRVs as part of the ST3 system expansion, even if construction of light rail extensions throughout the system is phased or delayed. The facility program includes functions that support the entire Link light rail system, such as receiving, testing, and commissioning LRVs. In addition, OMF South would include Maintenance of Way facilities and a Link System-Wide Storage building to receive and store vehicle parts and components, tracks and components, and station parts and components.
3 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

Throughout early scoping, scoping, and Draft EIS publication under SEPA, Sound Transit has provided multiple opportunities for Tribal, agency, and public involvement in defining the project purpose and need, the range of alternatives to be considered and areas of concern within the study area. The previous and upcoming opportunities for engagement as part of the alternatives development and environmental review process are summarized below.

3.1 SEPA Early Scoping & Alternatives Development

While not required, Sound Transit chose to engage in SEPA early scoping to involve and seek input on the project from the Tribes, agencies, and the public as early as possible. Sound Transit conducted early scoping concurrently with the Tacoma Dome Link Extension project from April 2, 2018 to May 3, 2018. Sound Transit advertised early scoping through a SEPA Register notice, postcards to properties along the corridor, print and online advertisements, and social media posts. During the comment period, Sound Transit held three in-person community open houses. An online open house with project information was also available for the duration of the comment period. During early scoping, Sound Transit asked for input on the project’s potential location, benefits, impacts, and purpose and need.

Through early scoping and stakeholder coordination, 24 sites were initially identified for evaluation. These alternatives were assessed through a multi-level screening process using criteria developed from the project purpose and need statement. All alternatives that passed Level 2 screening were carried forward into scoping. The Alternatives Evaluation Technical Memorandum is available on the Sound Transit project website: https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/operations-and-maintenance-facility-south-alternatives-evaluation-technical-memorandum.pdf.

3.2 SEPA Scoping

Sound Transit conducted SEPA scoping from February 19 to April 1, 2019. Sound Transit provided notice of SEPA scoping through publication of the Determination of Significance/Scoping notice in the SEPA Register, newsletters mailed to household and businesses, project email updates, toolkits provided to local organizations to share project information, print and online advertisements, and social media posts. During the comment period, Sound Transit held two in-person open houses in the community and one agency meeting. Project information was also available online for the duration of scoping through an online open house. During scoping, Sound Transit asked for input on the proposed range of alternatives, the project’s purpose and need, environmental effects and benefits to be analyzed, the probable significant adverse impacts, and potential mitigation measures. The Scoping Summary Report, which includes a summary of the comments received, is available on Sound Transit’s website: https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/operations-and-maintenance-facility-south-scoping-information-report.pdf

Following the scoping process, the Sound Transit Board considered the alternatives evaluation, comments from Tribes, agencies, and the public and identified alternatives for study in the
3.3 SEPA Draft EIS

Sound Transit published a SEPA Draft EIS on March 5, 2021. The SEPA Draft EIS evaluated alternatives, environmental impacts, and proposed mitigation measures. In anticipation of federalizing the project, the SEPA Draft EIS contains an appendix that addresses Federal requirements usually integrated with FTA NEPA reviews, such as the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 4(f) requirements.

A 45-day comment period was held following publication of the SEPA Draft EIS from March 5 to April 19, 2021. Sound Transit provided notices regarding the availability of the SEPA Draft EIS through the SEPA Register, newspaper notices, email updates, display advertisements, online community calendar postings, mailers to addresses within 0.5 miles of the site, and social media posts. Opportunities to submit comments were provided through an online comment form, email, voicemail, U.S. mail, and verbally during two online public hearings. After consideration of the Draft EIS analysis and comments received, the Sound Transit Board identified the South 336th Street Alternative as the Preferred Alternative. Please see the Section 6 Bibliography for a list of documents that were prepared during the SEPA DEIS process.

3.4 NEPA Notice of Intent and Scoping

To support federal approvals and potential federal funding, the project will comply with NEPA. Pursuant to NEPA, FTA issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register and will hold a 30-day scoping period. The NOI provides information on the proposed project, and invites all State, Tribal, local governments, and the public to comment on potential alternatives, information, and analyses to be considered in the EIS.

The NOI is available here: Federal Register :: Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Operations and Maintenance Facility South Project, King County, Washington.

FTA will consider all comments received during the NEPA scoping period and those previously submitted during the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) scoping process. Commenters who previously provided SEPA scoping comments do not need to resubmit those same comments for consideration under NEPA, but may elect to do so.

3.5 NEPA Draft/SEPA Supplemental Draft EIS

After consideration of the NEPA scoping comments, FTA and Sound Transit will prepare a Draft EIS under NEPA. The document will also serve as SEPA Supplemental Draft EIS and address any changes to the project since the 2021 SEPA Draft EIS. Following publication of the NEPA Draft/SEPA Supplemental Draft EIS, FTA and Sound Transit will solicit comment from Tribes, agencies, and the public during a 45-day comment period.

3.6 NEPA/SEPA Final EIS

FTA and Sound Transit will coordinate with Tribes and agencies, as needed, to provide an overview of the changes in the Final EIS from the Draft EIS and determine the mitigation
proposed for the Preferred Alternative. The Final EIS will include responses to substantive comments received on the 2021 SEPA Draft EIS and the NEPA Draft/SEPA Supplemental Draft EIS. Following publication of the Final EIS, the Sound Transit Board will select the project to build.

### 3.7 Record of Decision (ROD)

After publication of the Final EIS, FTA is anticipated to issue a ROD that will present the basis for the decision on the project and summarize any mitigation measures incorporated into the project.

Figure 3 lists major environmental review process milestones for the project. The schedule is preliminary and will be updated as the project progresses and based on input from Tribes and agencies.
Figure 3. Tribes/Agency Coordination and Environmental Review Milestones
4 TRIBAL AND AGENCY ENGAGEMENT

NEPA emphasizes the importance of coordinating with Tribes and agencies early in the environmental evaluation process and maintaining that coordination through project decisions. Three categories of agency participation have been delineated to facilitate coordination for projects led by the U.S. Department of Transportation agencies, including FTA: lead agencies, cooperating agencies, and participating agencies.

4.1 Lead Agency

FTA is the lead federal agency under NEPA, and Sound Transit is the lead agency under SEPA. FTA and Sound Transit have invited agencies to be cooperating and participating agencies during the NEPA EIS scoping process. As the lead agency under NEPA, FTA leads consultation on federal regulations, such as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

4.2 Tribal Coordination and Consultation

FTA consults with federally recognized Tribes based on the federal trust relationship. Multiple laws, regulations, and executive orders reinforce this fundamental responsibility to consult with and consider Tribes’ interests. FTA invited Tribes with a potential interest in the project area to participate in cultural resources and environmental review processes. FTA initiated government-to-government consultation and Section 106 consultation with the following Tribes:

- Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation (Yakama Nation)
- Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
- Nisqually Indian Tribe
- Puyallup Tribe of the Puyallup Reservation (Puyallup Tribe of Indians)
- Snoqualmie Indian Tribe
- Squaxin Island Tribe of the Squaxin Island Reservation (Squaxin Island Tribe)
- Suquamish Indian Tribe of the Port Madison Reservation (Suquamish Tribe)

4.3 Cooperating Agencies

Cooperating agencies, per NEPA (40 CFR 1501.6 and 40 CFR 1508.5), are agencies with jurisdiction or special expertise with respect to environmental issues that should be addressed in the EIS. Cooperating agencies may take part in developing information, preparing environmental analyses, and providing staff support to enhance the lead agency’s interdisciplinary capability. Cooperating agencies are also expected to use the environmental process and documentation to address environmental issues of concern to the agency. Table 1 identifies the agencies FTA and Sound Transit invited to be cooperating agencies and why they are identified as such.
### Table 1. Invited Cooperating Agencies

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cooperating Agencies</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Permits / Approvals</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bonneville Power Administration</td>
<td>Agency with jurisdiction</td>
<td>• Approval related to crossing BPA powerlines</td>
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<td>• NEPA environmental determination</td>
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<td>Federal Highway Administration, Washington State</td>
<td>Agency with jurisdiction, property owner, special expertise on highways</td>
<td>• Airspace lease and other interstate modification or use approvals</td>
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<td>Division</td>
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<td>• ROD or other NEPA environmental determination</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</td>
<td>Agency with jurisdiction</td>
<td>Clean Water Act, Sections 401 and 404</td>
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<td>Washington State Department of Transportation</td>
<td>Agency with jurisdiction, property owner, special expertise on highways</td>
<td>• Airspace lease: state transportation routes</td>
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<td>• Temporary construction airspace lease</td>
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<td>• Access revision report</td>
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<td>• Survey permits</td>
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<td>• Development permits, including conditional use permit or land use code amendment</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Development permits, including conditional use permit or land use code amendment</td>
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### 4.4 Participating Agencies

Participating agencies, per NEPA (23 USC §139), are include agencies that may have an interest in the project but are not a lead or cooperating agency. Additionally, in implementing SEPA, appropriate agencies must be consulted in the EIS process as required by WAC 197-11-502.

Participating agencies are responsible for providing comments, responses, studies, or methodologies on those areas within the special expertise or jurisdiction of the agency. Participating agencies are also expected to use the environmental process and documentation to address environmental issues of concern to the agency and support future permit and approval efforts. Table 2 identifies the agencies FTA and Sound Transit invited to be participating agencies and why they are identified as such.
### Table 2. Invited Participating Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating Agencies</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Permits/Approvals and Potential Interest</th>
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</table>
| National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries, West Coast Region | Special expertise on marine biological resources | - Endangered Species Act Review, Section 7 consultation  
- Magnuson-Stevens Act consultation |
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10 | Special expertise on multiple environmental resources | - Midway Landfill Record of Decision |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Special expertise on fish and wildlife | - Endangered Species Act Review, Section 7 consultation |
| WA Department of Archaeology and Historic Places | Special expertise on historic and archaeological resources | - Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act |
| Washington Department of Ecology | Agency with jurisdiction and special expertise on multiple environmental resources | - Temporary modification of water quality criteria, underground storage tank notification Requirement, Clean Water Act, Section 401 Water Quality Certification  
- Midway Landfill Consent Decree and Clean Up Action Plan |
| Washington Department Fish and Wildlife | Special expertise on fish and wildlife | - Hydraulic Project Approval |
| Puget Sound Clean Air Agency | Special expertise on air quality | - Notice of Construction (Air Quality) |
| Puget Sound Regional Council | Special expertise on regional growth | - Not applicable |
| King County Metro | Special expertise on transit | - Not applicable |
| Seattle Public Utilities | Special expertise on the Midway Landfill, Property owner | - Not applicable |
5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

This section outlines the public involvement goals, types of outreach activities, and tools that have been and will continue to be used to engage the public. The section also discusses the commitment to reach minority and low-income (environmental justice) populations that could be affected by the project.

5.1 Public Involvement Approach

The public involvement approach includes the following goals:

- Inform the public of the project’s purpose and need, and identify and communicate the process and schedule for public participation.
- Actively seek public input throughout project stages of planning, environmental review, project development, and design.
- Research and respond to public inquiries, suggestions, and ideas in the decision-making process.
- Provide opportunities for the public to affect major decisions before they are finalized.
- Publicize programs and activities through a variety of diverse communication vehicles and make the proceedings and records available for public review.
- Provide the public with different and innovative opportunities and methods for accessing project information throughout each project phase.
- Ensure diverse populations, including minority and low-income populations and persons with disabilities, are engaged in the planning and development process by making materials available in multiple formats, holding meetings in accessible facilities, and providing meeting and project information to underserved populations.
- Communicate key project milestones and accomplishments to show progress toward project completion and the start of service. Ensure transparency of the process by communicating the project’s needs, potential solutions, schedules, and budget information.
- Use information obtained through past and ongoing stakeholder interviews and public outreach efforts to enhance the project team’s knowledge of the area, key stakeholders, and community leaders.
- Create a project record of public input, responses, and outreach activities.
- Continuously monitor and adapt outreach activities and tools to help reach affected and interested populations and interests.

5.2 Outreach Activities and Tools

From the first public outreach in 2018 during SEPA early scoping, the project has used the outreach activities and tools identified below and will continue to apply and adapt them as work continues. Some of the activities will be focused on specific milestones, but many will be applied on an ongoing basis. Outreach activities will be coordinated between FTA, Sound Transit and the project team, which includes government relations, planning, design, environmental
processes, media relations, communications, and outreach staff. The tools and activities being used or that will be used include the following:

- Public meetings and comment periods
- Printed materials (e.g., fact sheets)
- Online public meetings (e.g., webinar)
- Notifications (postcards, community calendars, email, online/print display advertisements)
- Community fairs and festivals
- Various comment tools (web-based questionnaire and comment forms, comment forms at meetings, email, mail)
- Social media
- Briefings (residents, property owners, community based organizations, Tribes, agencies, and elected officials, including briefings to city or county councils, and for the public)
- Stakeholder interviews
- Legal notices
- Sound Transit web page
- Interactive maps on website

5.3 Public Outreach to Minority and Low-Income Populations

The project’s public involvement efforts are designed to help identify and involve minority and low-income populations that could benefit from the project or be affected by the project. Sound Transit’s community engagement procedures, EO 12898, U.S. Department of Transportation Order 5610.2(a), and FTA Circular C 4703.1 require Sound Transit to provide meaningful opportunities for minority, low-income, and limited-English proficiency groups to engage in the planning process. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin.

These directives make environmental justice a part of the decision-making process by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects of Sound Transit’s programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. Sound Transit conducted a preliminary demographic analysis to identify low-income, minority, and limited-English-proficiency populations. Based on this analysis, FTA and Sound Transit will use the following strategies to engage these populations during EIS scoping:

- Provide translated text on posters in Spanish, Korean, and Russian
- Provide translated meeting handouts in Spanish, Korean, and Russian
- Publicize events online and in print with language-specific media publications
- Fully translate the online open house web pages into Spanish, Korean, and Russian as well as provide an embedded Google Translate tool that can translate text into over 100 languages.

Sound Transit has and continues to seek input and identify additional ways to reach low-income, minority, and limited-English-proficiency populations as the project prepares its environmental
documentation. A full description of public outreach specific to minority and low-income populations, including activities and outcomes, will be included as an appendix to the EIS.
6 BIBLIOGRAPHY


Sound Transit. June 2018. Early Scoping Summary Report Tacoma Dome Link Extension and Operations and Maintenance Facility South. Available at: https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/project-documents/AE%25200030-17%2520%2520Early%2520Scoping%2520Summary%2520Report%2520and%2520Appendices%2520.pdf


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