



## Draft Environmental Impact Statement Public Engagement Summary

### Executive Summary

The Operations and Maintenance Facility South project is in the planning phase. Sound Transit held a public comment period from March 5 to April 19, 2021, to invite comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Draft EIS evaluates three possible OMF South sites and their potential impacts to the natural and built environment and proposes ways to offset impacts to surrounding communities. We provided information about the Draft EIS in English, Spanish, Korean, and Russian and invited comments through an online comment form, by mail, by email, by voicemail, and through two online public meetings and hearings. More than 2,400 people visited the online open house during the comment period, including more than 450 visitors to our in-language sites, and we received more than 270 comments. This document summarizes outreach activities and public participation during the Draft EIS comment period. For a summary of public comments submitted on the Draft EIS, please read the [Draft EIS Comment Summary Report](#). The Final EIS will include responses to substantive comments on the Draft EIS and is scheduled to be issued in 2022.

El proyecto de la Unidad de Operaciones y Mantenimiento del sur está en la etapa de planeación. Sound Transit tuvo un período de comentarios del público desde el 5 de marzo hasta el 19 de abril de 2021 para obtener comentarios sobre el borrador de la declaración de impacto ambiental (Environmental Impact Statement, EIS). El borrador de la EIS evalúa los tres sitios posibles de la Unidad de Operaciones y Mantenimiento (Operations and Maintenance Facility) del sur, sus posibles impactos sobre el medioambiente natural y construido y propone maneras para compensar los impactos a las comunidades circundantes. Brindamos información sobre el borrador de la EIS en inglés, español, coreano y ruso, y solicitamos comentarios a través de un formulario de comentarios virtual, por correo postal, correo electrónico, correo de voz y dos reuniones y audiencias públicas en línea. Más de 2,400 personas estuvieron en la jornada de puertas abiertas en línea durante el período de comentarios, incluidos más de 450 visitantes a nuestros sitios en otros idiomas, y recibimos más de 270 comentarios. Este documento resume las actividades de divulgación y participación pública durante el período de comentarios sobre el borrador de la EIS. Para obtener un resumen de los comentarios públicos enviados sobre el borrador de la EIS, lea el [resumen del informe de los comentarios](#) sobre el borrador de la EIS. La EIS final incluirá respuestas a comentarios sustanciales sobre el borrador de la EIS y está programada para emitirse en 2022. Para información acerca del proyecto llame al: 1-800-823-9230.

남부 운영 및 유지보수 시설 프로젝트가 계획 단계에 있습니다. 환경 영향 평가 보고서 (Environmental Impact Statement) 초안에 의견을 모으기 위해 Sound Transit 은 2021 년 3 월 5 일부터 4 월 19 일까지 공개 의견 제출 기간을 진행했습니다. EIS 초안은 가능성 있는 OMF (Operations and Maintenance Facility) 남부 지역과 자연 및 인공 환경에 미치는 잠재적 영향을 평가하고 주변 지역사회에 미치는 영향을 상쇄할 수 있는 방법을 제안합니다. EIS 초안에 관한 정보는 영어, 스페인어, 한국어 및 러시아어로 제공했으며, 온라인 의견 양식, 우편, 이메일, 음성 메일 및

포함하여 2,400 명 이상의 사람들이 온라인 오픈 하우스를 방문했고, 270 개 이상의 의견을 받을 수 있었습니다. 본 문서는 EIS 초안 의견 제출 기간 동안 이루어진 지원 활동 및 공개 참여에 관한 내용을 요약합니다. EIS 초안에 제출된 공개 의견 요약 내용을 확인하려면 [EIS 초안 의견 요약 보고서를 참고해 주십시오](#). 최종 EIS 에는 EIS 초안에 제시되었던 실질적 의견에 대한 답변이 포함될 것이며 2022 년에 발표할 예정입니다. 프로젝트에 관한 정보는 다음으로 연락하십시오: 1-800-823-9230.

Проект Operations and Maintenance Facility South (OMF South, Южного центра эксплуатации и технического обслуживания) находится на стадии планирования. Компания Sound Transit отвела период с 5 марта по 19 апреля 2021 года для получения комментариев общественности о проекте Environmental Impact Statement (EIS, Заключение экологической экспертизы). В проекте EIS проводится оценка трёх возможных участков для строительства OMF South и их возможного воздействия на природную и антропогенную среду, а также предлагаются способы уменьшить последствия для сообществ, находящихся неподалёку. Мы предоставили информацию о проекте EIS на английском, испанском, корейском и русском языках и предложили высказывать свои мнения с помощью онлайн-формы, по почте, электронной почте, посредством голосовых сообщений, а также в ходе двух онлайн-собраний и слушаний. День открытых дверей, который проводился в режиме онлайн в период предоставления комментариев, посетили более 2400 человек, включая более 450 посетителей наших языковых сайтов, которые оставили свыше 270 комментариев. В настоящем документе приводится краткий обзор информационно-разъяснительной работы и участия общественности в период предоставления комментариев о проекте EIS. С краткой справкой о комментариях общественности о проекте EIS можно ознакомиться в [Draft EIS Comment Summary Report](#) (Сводном отчёте о комментариях относительно проекта EIS). Окончательная редакция EIS будет включать комментарии по существу проекта EIS и должна быть опубликована в 2022 году. Звоните 1-800-823-9230, чтобы получить информацию о проекте.

## Overview

As part of voter-approved funding for regional light rail expansion, Sound Transit needs to build a new Operations and Maintenance Facility in the South Sound to accommodate additional vehicles for the future 116-mile light rail system. Sound Transit will also extend Link light rail from the future Federal Way Transit Center station (opening in 2024) to the Tacoma Dome (estimated opening in 2030-2031).

We launched the Operations and Maintenance Facility South project in 2018 in conjunction with the Tacoma Dome Link Extension. Following multiple engagement periods that kicked off the environmental review process, Sound Transit is currently considering three sites for the future OMF South: the Midway Landfill Alternative, the South 336th Street Alternative, and the South 344th Street Alternative. The Midway Landfill Alternative is located in Kent and the other two alternatives are located in Federal Way (see Appendix A).

On March 5, 2021, we published our [Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#), which evaluates possible OMF South sites and their potential impacts to the natural and built environment. It also proposes ways to mitigate unavoidable impacts. From March 5 to April 19, Sound Transit held an extended 45-day public comment period to invite comments on the Draft EIS findings.

## Engagement by the numbers



Nearly **9,000** mailers sent to homes, apartments and businesses along the project corridor



**270+** formal public comments received on the Draft EIS



Over **2,400** users participated in an online open house from March 5 – April 19



**Two** online public meetings and hearings with more than **120** attendees



**Three** project email updates sent to more than **7,000** recipients on South Sound email lists



Print and online display advertisements placed in **eight** local publications



Notification toolkits sent to **17** local organizations to share with their constituents and members



Held briefings with **11** community and partner organizations and **seven** property owners and property owner groups



**14,000+** impressions on Sound Transit's Facebook and Twitter posts

## Comment opportunities

From March 5 – April 19, the public was invited to comment on the Draft EIS in the following ways:

- Submitting comments through the online form on the website for the Draft EIS: [omfsouth.participate.online](https://omfsouth.participate.online).
- Providing verbal comments during the public hearing portion of two online public meetings and hearings on March 24 and March 30.
- Emailing comments to [OMFSouthDEIS@soundtransit.org](mailto:OMFSouthDEIS@soundtransit.org) and [emailtheboard@soundtransit.org](mailto:emailtheboard@soundtransit.org).
- Leaving us a voicemail at 206-257-2135.
- Mailing a letter to OMF South c/o Hussein Rehmat Sound Transit, 401 S Jackson Street, Seattle, WA 98104.

We received more than 270 public comments on the Draft EIS (see Appendix B for a breakdown of comments by method). The Draft EIS Comment Summary Report, or a summary of all the comments we received, is available on the OMF South [project website](#).

## Outreach Activities

Community input is integral to the success of the OMF South project. Sound Transit is committed to equitable community engagement and actively reflects on public input to incorporate lessons learned to improve future conversations. Sound Transit values building stronger relationships with historically underserved communities in the OMF South project area. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, engagement during the Draft EIS comment period was largely conducted online.

### Online open house ([omfsouth.participate.online](https://omfsouth.participate.online))

An online open house was live for the duration of the comment period (March 5 – April 19). The public could visit the website to review a summary of the findings of the Draft EIS, access the Draft EIS and supporting materials, and submit Draft EIS comments via an online comment form. In addition to English, the website was also available in Korean, Russian and Spanish. The website contained accessibility features including screen reader-friendly content and detailed alternative text, and digital factsheets and documents throughout the site were made into accessible PDFs. More than 2,400 people visited the online open house, including more than 450 visitors to the in-language sites.

### Online public meetings and hearings

Sound Transit hosted two virtual public meetings and hearings via Zoom Webinar to provide general information about the Draft EIS and offer attendees the opportunity to provide public comment. The virtual public meetings and hearings took place on Wednesday, March 24, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and on Tuesday, March 30, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. More than 120 people attended the two meetings. Sound Transit used Zoom Webinar because of its standard accessibility features, including its screen-reader friendliness. A live captioner provided simultaneous subtitles in English, and Spanish, Korean and Russian interpreters provided simultaneous interpretation in audio channels. Sound Transit staff communicated the language and accessibility features throughout the meetings and hearings to ensure attendees understood how to fully participate.

The first hour of the meeting consisted of a pre-recorded presentation and a live question-and-answer segment. The presentation provided an overview of the OMF South project and the Draft EIS comment period. The Q&A segment offered the public the opportunity to submit written questions for answers from a panel of Sound Transit staff who represented different disciplines on the project team, including engineering and design, environmental, and property acquisition and relocation.

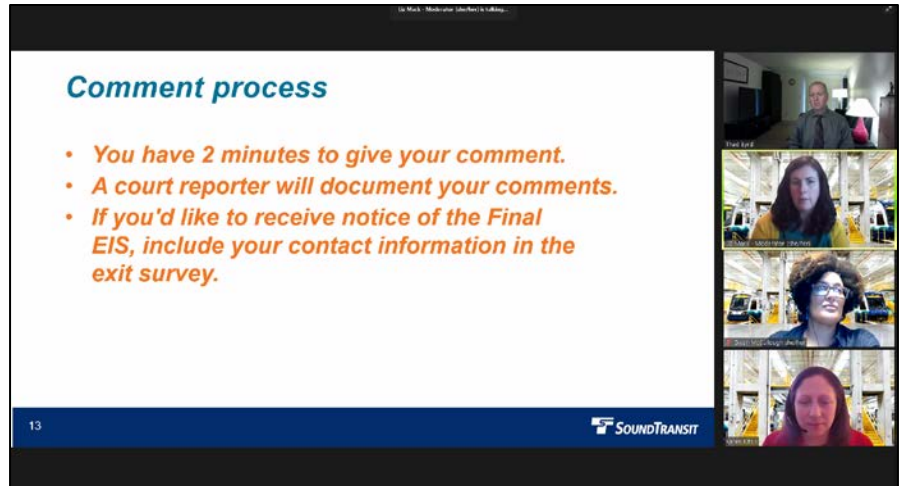


Figure 1: Online public meeting and hearing

The second hour consisted of a public hearing with a representative of Sound Transit listening to attendees who wanted to provide a public comment. A court reporter documented the verbal public comments for their incorporation into the Draft EIS. While all members of the public were invited to provide comments, in an effort to center on equity and provide access to people who have historically been excluded from public processes, Sound Transit facilitated the hearing like boarding groups for an airplane. Sound Transit invited attendees who identified as people of color, people with disabilities, and anyone working with an interpreter the opportunity to speak first before opening the floor to the rest of the attendees.

### Mailer

The project team sent 8,962 mailers to residences and businesses within a half-mile of site alternatives. The mailer included translations in Korean, Russian and Spanish. The content included information about the comment period timeline, an overview of site locations, directions on how to comment, and resources where recipients could find more information about the OMF South and Draft EIS process. Sound Transit collaborated with stakeholder organizations to review translated materials to ensure clarity.

### Online and print display ads for South Sound publications

Sound Transit ran print display ads and online ad campaigns in eight publications throughout the comment period. Ad placements included English, Spanish, Korean, and Russian publications to reach audiences in the project area and region. Online ads were geo-targeted when possible to focus on audiences in Kent and Federal Way. Prior to the March 24 and March 30 public meeting and hearing, the ad messaging communicated learning more about the Draft EIS and raising awareness of the virtual public meetings and hearings. After the March 30 virtual public meeting and hearing, the ad messaging shifted to communicating the different ways people could comment on the Draft EIS. The project team placed OMF South Draft EIS ads in the following publications: *Kent Reporter*, *Federal Way Mirror*, *International Examiner*, *El Siete Dias*, *Tu Decides*, *Korean Times Seattle*, *Russian Town Seattle*, and Facebook (geo-targeted ads in English, Spanish and Russian).

**Sound Transit project listserv updates**

The project team sent three listserv emails to over 7,000 subscribers of the OMF South, Tacoma Dome Link Extension, Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension, and Federal Way Link Extension projects. The purpose of these listserv updates was to announce the open comment period, direct recipients on how to submit comments, and invite people to the online public meetings and hearings.

**Social media**

Sound Transit promoted the OMF South project and Draft EIS comment period and online open house through content on Sound Transit's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts and the Platform blog. This included posts and events for the two online public meetings and hearings on Facebook, posts on Twitter, a feature "Fieldtrip Friday" on Sound Transit's Instagram story on March 5, and a March 5 blog post.

**Sharing physical materials**

In-person engagement was restricted due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. To increase accessibility for the community, project staff delivered physical copies of the Draft EIS and comment forms to frequently visited community hubs, such as the Kent Library and Federal Way Community Center, and to other locations by community request. The project team also distributed physical comment forms to multi-family property owners upon request.

**Property owner engagement**

Outreach and engagement with property owners began prior to the publication of the Draft EIS. Prior to COVID-19 and social distancing, the project team made several trips to South King County in 2019 and 2020 to flyer businesses and residential homes neighboring OMF South site alternatives to provide them with information on the OMF South project.

In early January 2021, Sound Transit mailed a property owner letter to all residents that were identified as having a partial impact or full impact by one of the OMF South site alternatives. Included in the letter to property owners was a link to an online scheduling tool where property owners could sign up for a residential or commercial property group briefing with members of the project team. Information provided at the property owner briefing included an overview of the project background, environmental review process, and property acquisition and relocation process. The project team called businesses partially or fully impacted by one of or more of the OMF South site alternatives. These calls offered briefings so that businesses could learn more about the project, the property acquisition and relocation process, and how to comment on the Draft EIS.

Sound Transit held three individual property owner briefings during the Draft EIS comment period and will continue to offer briefings upon request. We also met with the following property owner groups during the comment period to provide project updates and answer questions:

- Belmor Park leadership and residents
- Pacific Christian Academy
- Christian Faith Center
- GarageTown

### **Briefings to organizations and cities in the project corridor**

Sound Transit sought briefing opportunities with organizations that they have been intentionally building relationships with by meeting these groups in established virtual spaces where they regularly meet. Sound Transit tailored conversations to individual organizations to better meet the needs of the groups. The project team offered briefings to more than 20 city partners, chambers of commerce, neighborhood associations and social service providers. Of those, 11 invited Sound Transit to speak to their groups about the Draft EIS findings. Discussion topics also included questions about the EIS process, next steps for the Sound Transit Board, how community input factors into the Board decision for a preferred alternative, and other Sound Transit projects in the area.

Sound Transit met with the following groups:

- City of Federal Way
- City of Kent
- Des Moines City Council
- Federal Way Black Collective
- Federal Way Chamber of Commerce
- Federal Way City Council
- Federal Way Planning Commission
- Kent Chamber of Commerce
- Kent City Council
- Multi-Service Center
- Washington State Department of Ecology, Environmental Protection Agency and Seattle Public Utilities (joint briefing)

### **Outreach toolkit**

During the first week of the comment period, the project team distributed outreach toolkits to 17 jurisdictional partners and community organizations so they could amplify the Draft EIS comment period and the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS to their respective networks. The outreach toolkit included a newsletter, digital flyer, and social media posts. Toolkit recipients shared information about the Draft EIS comment period via their email listservs, social media accounts, and neighborhood forums like Nextdoor and homeowners' associations.

### **Legal notices**

Sound Transit ran a legal notice about the availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public comment in the Seattle Times, the Tacoma News Tribune and the Daily Journal of Commerce.

### **Outcomes and Next Steps**

The Draft EIS Comment Summary Report, or a summary of all the comments we received, is available on the [project website](#). Sound Transit will consider public input on the Draft EIS, and later this year, the Sound Transit Board will identify a “preferred alternative” for evaluation in the Final EIS along with other alternatives. (A preferred alternative is a statement of where the agency is leaning based on information available at the time;

it is not a final decision on the site.) The Final EIS will include responses to all substantive comments received on the Draft EIS. The Final EIS is scheduled to be published in 2022.

After the Final EIS is issued, the Board will select the project to be built. This project schedule could be impacted by Sound Transit's [realignment process](#) due to the impacts of COVID-19 and ongoing pressures in the real estate and construction sectors of the economy. Sound Transit will continue to engage with the public through the Final EIS, design and construction.



## Appendix A: Draft EIS Alternatives Overview Map



## Appendix B: Comments Received by Comment Method

The table below shows the number of public comments on the Draft EIS that were received for each comment method. For a summary of all public comments submitted on the Draft EIS, please read the [Draft EIS Comment Summary Report](#).

<b>Method</b>	<b>Number of comments</b>
Online open house	95
Email	149
Letter	17
Voicemail	2
Online public hearing	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>