



Operations and Maintenance Facility South

Scoping Information Report

February 2019

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

EIS	environmental impact statement
I-5	Interstate 5
OMF	Operations and Maintenance Facility
OMF South	Operations and Maintenance Facility South
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
Sound Transit	Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority
SR	State Route
ST2	Sound Transit 2
ST3	Sound Transit 3

1 INTRODUCTION

Notice for Operations and Maintenance Facility South Scoping Period: February 19 to April 1, 2019

The Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (Sound Transit) is conducting scoping for an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed Operations and Maintenance Facility South (OMF South) project. The scoping process helps Sound Transit identify and consider potential alternatives and effects on the environment to be studied in the EIS. The build alternatives being considered for the operations and maintenance facility (OMF) include sites in Kent, Federal Way, and an unincorporated area in King County. **Exhibit 1** shows the project area and the general location of the potential site alternatives.

The project is part of the Sound Transit 3 (ST3) Plan of transit investments approved by voters in 2016. Sound Transit is now moving ahead to expand the Link light rail system in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. To store and service the expanded ST3 light rail fleet, a new OMF is needed in Sound Transit's South Corridor to support system expansion.

This environmental scoping information report includes:

- The project description and background
- The project's draft statement about its purpose and why it is needed
- The scoping process
- Scoping meeting dates and locations
- How to provide comments
- Potential project alternatives
- Topics to be evaluated in the EIS
- The environmental review process and schedule

Sound Transit will prepare the EIS in accordance with Washington's State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Sound Transit invites participation in the EIS process, including through the upcoming public scoping meetings.

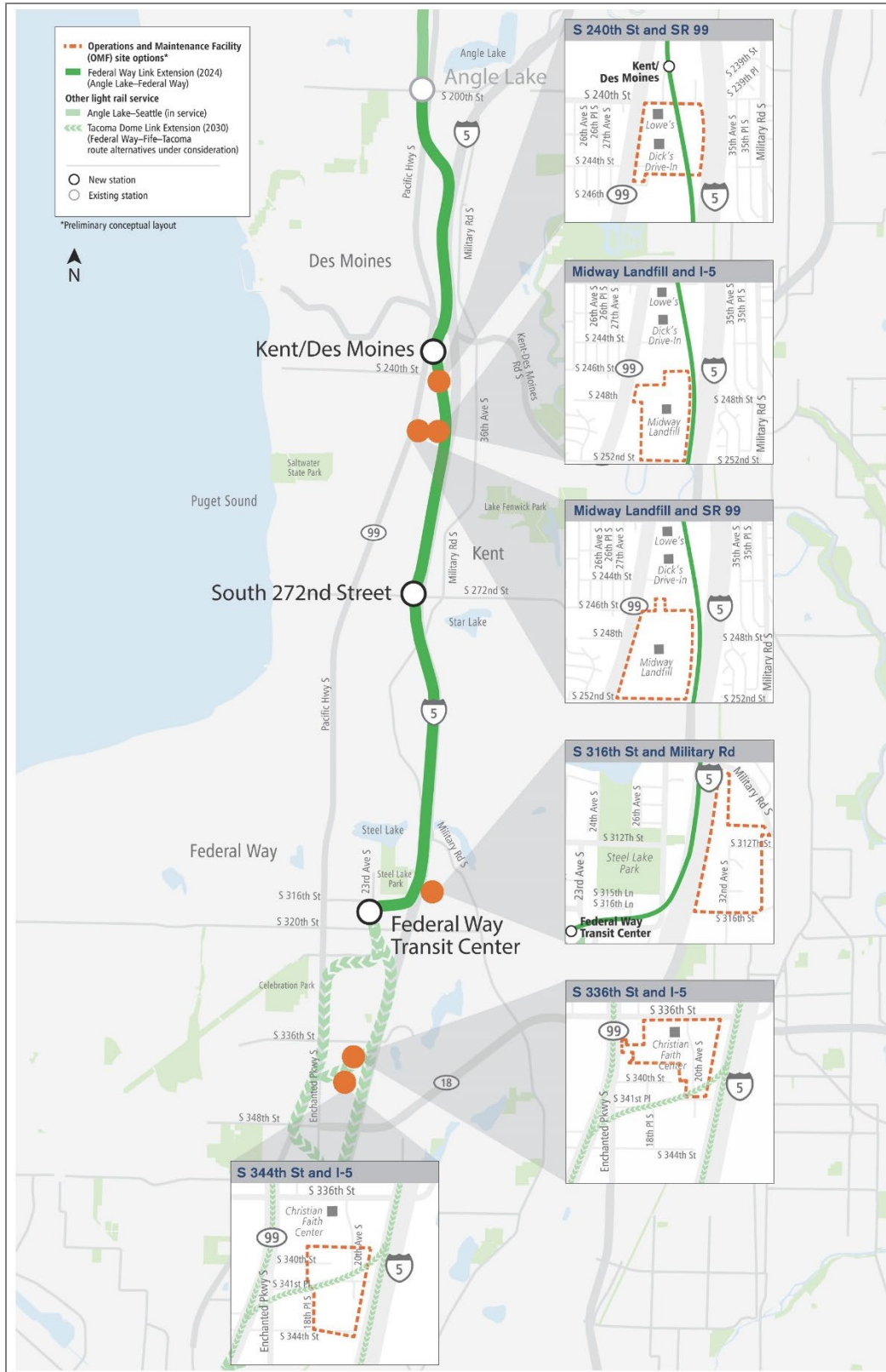


Exhibit 1. OMF South Project Area and Potential Alternatives

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

Sound Transit and the Region's Mass Transit System

Sound Transit was created to build a regional mass transit system connecting the urban centers of King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. In 1996, voters approved Sound Move, the first phase of investment in the mass transit system, which includes regional express buses, commuter rail, and light rail. Sound Transit began operating the first phase of the Link light rail system with the line from downtown Seattle south to SeaTac in 2009.

When voters approved the Sound Transit 2 (ST2) Plan in 2008, the second phase of investment in the region's mass transit system began. The plan added regional express bus and commuter rail service while building 36 additional miles of light rail to form a 55-mile regional system. The ST2 Plan extends light rail south to Federal Way, east to Redmond, and north to Lynnwood.

Voters approved the third phase of investment, the ST3 Plan, in 2016. In addition to bus, bus rapid transit, and commuter rail service expansion, the ST3 Plan adds 62 new miles of light rail for a regional system reaching 116 miles. ST3 extends light rail from Federal Way to Tacoma, as well as to Everett, South Kirkland, Issaquah, downtown Redmond, and the Seattle neighborhoods of West Seattle and Ballard. **Exhibit 2** shows the regional transit system map.

Operations and Maintenance Facility

To expand its light rail system as called for in ST3, Sound Transit needs additional facilities to store, maintain, and deploy a larger fleet of light rail vehicles. Sound Transit has an existing OMF at South Forest Street in Seattle and is building a second facility in Bellevue. Two additional OMFs, one in the North Corridor and one in the South Corridor, are needed as the system-wide fleet expands to more than 400 total light rail vehicles. These vehicles are needed to serve the 62-mile expansion of light rail and the future growth in ridership system-wide.

The site for the proposed OMF South needs to have the capacity to store and maintain potentially over 140 light rail vehicles. The OMF would contain light rail storage tracks as well as buildings, parking, storage areas, internal roads, landscaping, fencing, setbacks, stormwater facilities, electric transmission lines, and other utilities. The OMF also includes a 5-acre area for maintenance and yard storage, which includes vehicles, equipment, and a 30,000-square-foot building. The OMF needs to have tracks connecting to a light rail line that will be operating by 2026, which in southern King County is the Federal Way Link Extension. The length and location of these connecting tracks varies by alternative. The preliminary layout for the proposed OMF South results in about 40 to 50 acres when the OMF facilities, 5-acre storage area, and lead tracks are taken into account.

Draft Purpose and Need

Sound Transit has developed the following draft Purpose and Need statement for the project. This statement establishes the basis for developing and evaluating a range of reasonable alternatives for environmental review and will assist with the identification of a Preferred Alternative.



Exhibit 2. Sound Transit Regional System Map

The purpose of the OMF South is to support Sound Transit's Link light rail system expansion and the related increase in its light rail vehicle fleet and daily operations. The OMF South must:

- Provide a facility with the capacity to store, maintain, and deploy vehicles associated with system-wide light rail system 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 Sound Transit's ST3 Plan and its Regional Transit Long-Range Plan.
- Preserve and promote a healthy and sustainable environment by minimizing adverse impacts to people and the natural and built environments.

The project is needed because:

- The regional system does not currently have the operations and maintenance facility capacity necessary to efficiently operate and maintain the long-term light rail vehicle fleet required for the next phase of light rail expansion in King and Pierce counties.
- Light rail maintenance and storage capacity needs to be available by 2026 to accept delivery of and commission new vehicles and/or store existing vehicles while the new vehicles are tested and prepared.
- The current regional system lacks a facility with sufficient capacity that is located 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.

Potential Alternatives

For the EIS, Sound Transit will evaluate a No Build Alternative, as required by SEPA, along with "build" alternatives for developing and operating the facility at sites in Kent, Federal Way, or an unincorporated area in King County. The No Build Alternative is the baseline the EIS will use to measure the impacts of the build alternatives. The expansion of light rail and the need for additional OMF sites were identified in the update of the Sound Transit Regional Transit Long-Range Plan and the ST3 Plan. These plans included technical analysis, public engagement, and collaboration with state and local agencies and tribes.

Using suggestions from SEPA Early Scoping initiated in April 2018 as well as potential sites identified by Sound Transit, 24 potential OMF South sites were developed and evaluated. The evaluation considered system-wide operations needs, the system expansion schedule, capacity requirements, potential environmental impacts, preliminary cost estimates, and engineering risks. From the evaluation, the following sites were identified to continue into scoping (shown in **Exhibit 1**).

The potential sites Sound Transit is considering are:

- S 240th St and State Route (SR) 99. A potential site located to the east of SR 99, just south of S 240th Street in the City of Kent with approximately 0.5 mile of connecting tracks to the Federal Way Link Extension.
- Midway Landfill and Interstate 5 (I-5). A potential site south of S 246th Street partly adjacent to SR 99 and mostly on the former landfill site, with approximately 0.1 to 0.3 mile of connecting tracks to the Federal Way Link Extension.
- Midway Landfill and SR 99. A potential site south of S 246th Street and east of and adjacent to SR 99, and partly on the former landfill site, with approximately 0.5 mile of connecting tracks to the Federal Way Link Extension.
- S 316th St and Military Rd. A potential site east of I-5 in unincorporated King County, with approximately 0.5 mile of connecting tracks to and from the site bridging over I-5 to the Federal Way Link Extension.
- S 336th St and I-5. A potential site in the City of Federal Way, west of I-5 and south of S 336th Street, with approximately 1.1 miles of connecting tracks to the Federal Way Link Extension terminus. The connecting tracks could potentially be along I-5 or SR 99.
- S 344th St and I-5. A potential site in the City of Federal Way, west of I-5 and north of S 344th Street, with approximately 1.3 miles of connecting tracks to the Federal Way Link Extension terminus. The connecting tracks could potentially be along I-5 or SR 99.

More details on alternatives planning, evaluation results, and other background information on the sites are in the *OMF South Alternatives Evaluation Technical Memorandum* (Sound Transit 2019), which is available on the project website: www.soundtransit.org/omfs. This background document also describes other potential sites that were evaluated, and contains more information on the factors that affected the sites' ability to meet the Purpose and Need for the project, reduced their environmental performance, or constrained their ability to meet other technical or system operating requirements. One of the primary reasons for eliminating other sites, including those in Pierce County, was that they were not located close enough to an operating light rail line. In reviewing regional light rail system needs, Sound Transit found that potential sites located farther than 1.5 miles south of the Federal Way Link Extension would not be able to efficiently connect to an operating light rail line by 2026, which is when the new OMF must be able to serve vehicles operating across the regional light rail system.

3 THE SCOPING PROCESS

Scoping is an opportunity for the public to learn about and comment on the project as it begins, including the Purpose and Need, potential alternatives, and environmental resources to evaluate in the EIS. Scoping supports the project's overall planning, public involvement, and state and federal environmental approach. It helps Sound Transit to focus the EIS on significant environmental issues and to identify alternatives for the EIS. This includes helping Sound Transit to potentially narrow the range of alternatives being considered or modify alternatives to reduce environmental impacts.

A scoping notice for the EIS has been published in the SEPA register. Links to the notice are on the project's website at: www.soundtransit.org/omfs. Notices and advertisements for the upcoming public scoping meetings are in the following publications:

- Federal Way Mirror
- Kent Reporter
- Korea Daily
- Seattle Times
- Tacoma News Tribune
- Tacoma Weekly
- Tu Decides
- Westside Seattle

Notices and information are on the project website and Sound Transit's social media platforms, and were also sent out via email updates to the project's GovDelivery list serve. Additionally, emails will be sent to key stakeholders representing social service agencies and community groups that allow them to share information to their networks. Posters will be distributed to local businesses and community organizations along the project corridor.

As part of scoping, Sound Transit invites the public, agencies, and tribes to be involved in the ongoing EIS process and to comment on the purpose of the transit project, the range of potential alternatives, and environmental issues of concern.

Public Comment Period and Scoping Meetings

The comment period for scoping extends from February 19 to April 1, 2019. During this period, two public scoping meetings will be held to inform and obtain input from the community:

- **Federal Way Performing Arts and Events Center**
March 12, 2019, 6:00–8:00 p.m.
31510 Pete von Reichbauer Way S, Federal Way, WA 98003
- **Highline College**
March 20, 2019, 6:00–8:00 p.m.
2400 S 240th St, Des Moines, WA 98198
Building 8 Mt. Olympus Room

All public meeting locations are accessible to persons with disabilities. Alternative formats and translation services are available by contacting:

- Alternative formats: 1-800-201-4900
- Translation services: 1-800-823-9230
- Persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired: TTY Relay 711
- Email: accessibility@soundtransit.org

In addition to the public scoping meetings, a meeting will be held for tribes, agencies, and cities.

How to Comment

During the scoping process, comments can be provided in the following ways:

- Online: OMFSouth.participate.online
- Email: OMFSouthScoping@soundtransit.org
- Mail: Sound Transit, OMF South Project
c/o Hussein Rehmat, Environmental Planner
401 S Jackson Street, Seattle, WA 98104
(comments must be postmarked by April 1, 2019)
- Public Scoping Meetings: Written comment forms and computers will be available to access the online comment form

How Comments Will be Used

After the end of the comment period on April 1, 2019, Sound Transit will collect and consider the comments received and prepare a scoping report to summarize the comments and results of the scoping process. The report will be publicly available.

The comments received during the scoping period will be considered by Sound Transit to define the scope of the EIS and its related technical analyses.

In mid-2019, the Sound Transit Board is expected to identify the alternatives to be evaluated in the Draft EIS.

4 TOPICS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE EIS

The project will follow state regulations and guidance to identify and address the potential for significant environmental impacts caused by the construction or operation of the project. Public comments during the scoping process help the project team define the scope of analysis and identify significant impacts to be avoided, reduced, or mitigated. The following environmental elements are anticipated to be studied in the EIS:

- Transportation
 - Regional travel
 - Transit
 - Local travel—traffic, access and circulation, safety, bicycling, walking, and parking
 - Freight movement
- Land Use
- Economics
- Acquisitions and Displacements
- Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources
- Ecosystems
- Water Resources
- Parks and Recreation
- Noise and Vibration
- Community Impacts, including impacts to low-income or minority populations
- Public Services and Utilities
- Visual Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazardous Materials, including those that may remain at the Midway landfill site, or those that may be present at other sites from past or present uses involving toxins and other contaminants
- Air Quality, including greenhouse gas emissions
- Energy
- Electromagnetic Fields
- Construction Impacts
- Cumulative Effects, including climate change and environmental sustainability, as well as the effects of other projects

5 NEXT STEPS

Following the close of the scoping comment period, Sound Transit will publish a scoping summary report documenting the public, agency, and tribal comments it has received. **Exhibit 3** shows the general project timeline for planning, design, and construction. In the 2nd Quarter of 2019, the Sound Transit Board is expected to consider a motion addressing the Purpose and Need for the project, the scope of environmental review, and the alternatives to be considered in the Draft EIS. Sound Transit plans to publish the Draft EIS in 2020, with a Final EIS and Sound Transit Board selection of the project to be built in 2021. Final design, construction, and testing of the facility would occur from about 2021 to 2026, when operations would begin.



Exhibit 3. OMF South Project Timeline

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

PSRC (Puget Sound Regional Council). 2018. Regional Transportation Plan, Appendix G—Regional Capacity Projects List. Project ID 5685. Available at: <https://www.psrc.org/sites/default/files/rtp-appendixg-regionalcapacityprojectlist.pdf>. October 2018.

Sound Transit. 1996. Sound Move—The Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan. Adopted May 31, 1996.

Sound Transit. 2005. Regional Transit Long-Range Plan. Adopted July 7, 2005.

Sound Transit. 2008. Sound Transit 2: A Mass Transit Guide—The Regional Transit System Plan for Central Puget Sound. July 2008.

Sound Transit. 2014. Regional Transit Long-Range Plan. Adopted December 18, 2014.

Sound Transit. 2018. Early Scoping Summary Report. June 2018.

Sound Transit. 2019. OMF South Alternatives Evaluation Technical Memorandum. February 2019.

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