

North Corridor Transit Project Environmental Scoping Summary Report



SOUND TRANSIT

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Seattle, WA 98104-2826

December 2011

 **North Corridor
Transit Partners**
PARAMETRIX + PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF

Table of Contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations	ii
Introduction	1
North Corridor Transit Project Overview	1
The Scoping Process	2
Notices and Advertisements	3
Background Materials	4
Public and Agency Scoping Meetings	5
Public Meetings.....	5
Agency Meeting.....	6
Summary of Comments Received	6
Comments from the General Public	7
Comments from Agencies and Jurisdictions.....	10
Local Jurisdictions	10
County and Regional Agencies	12
State.....	13
Federal	13
Organizations.....	14
Project Correspondence Received After the Close of the Scoping Comment Period....	14
Next Steps.....	16
List of Figures	
Figure 1. North Corridor Transit Project Schedule	2
Attachments	
Attachment A – Parties Providing Scoping Comments	
Attachment B – Agency Meeting Attendees	

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FTA	Federal Transit Authority
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
Sound Transit	Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority
SR	State Route
TOD	transit-oriented development
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

INTRODUCTION

From September 30 to October 31, 2011, Sound Transit (the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted public scoping for the North Corridor Transit Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Sound Transit is proposing the North Corridor Transit Project to connect to the regional light rail system in the Northgate neighborhood of Seattle, with alternatives to extend light rail northward to the cities of Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace, and Lynnwood.

Scoping supports the environmental review process requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). FTA and Sound Transit have determined that the project has the potential to result in significant environmental effects, and an EIS is needed. Scoping allows the public, agencies, and tribes to learn about and provide comments to help guide the EIS review for the proposed project.

This Scoping Summary Report summarizes the scoping process and the comments Sound Transit and FTA received. Sound Transit and FTA are considering the comments as they identify the range of alternatives and potential environmental issues to be evaluated in the EIS.

NORTH CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT OVERVIEW

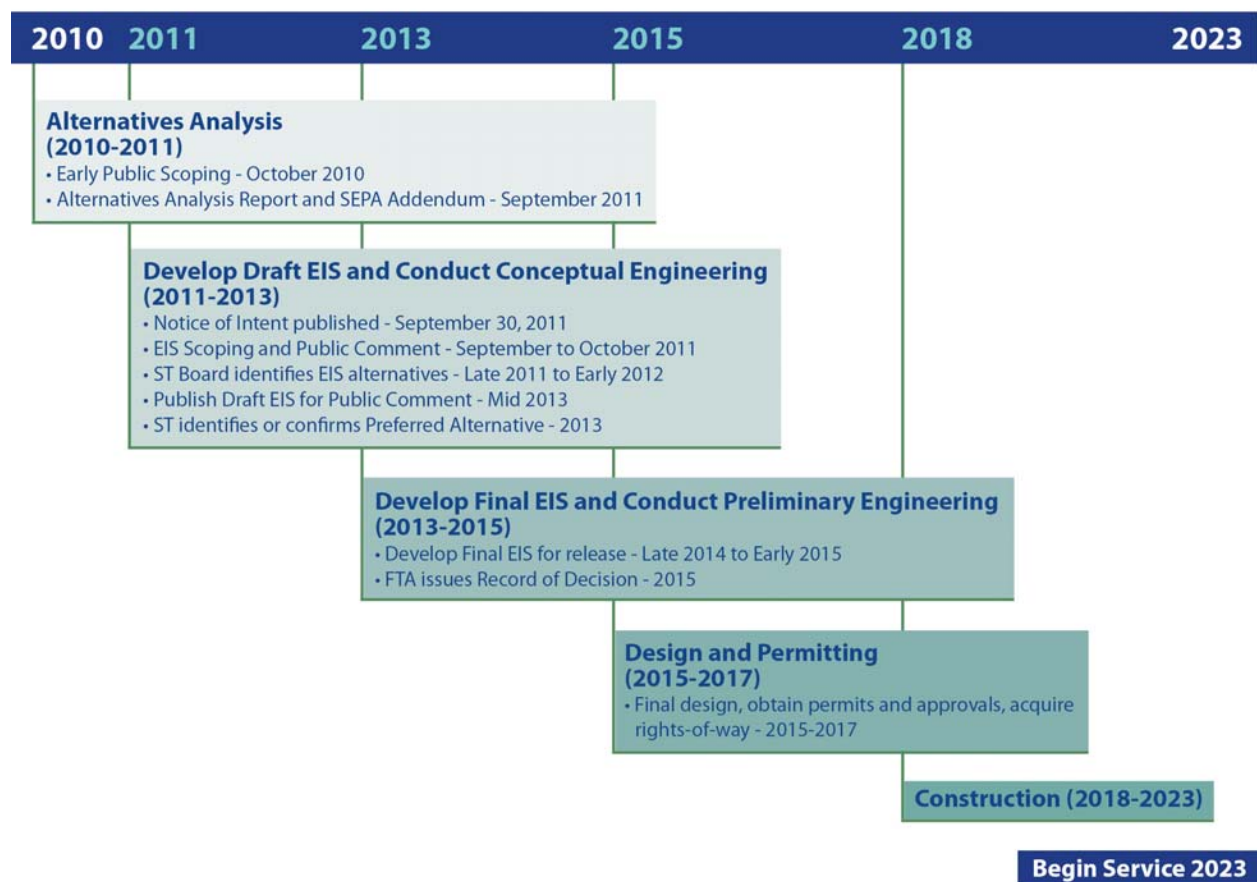
The North Corridor generally follows I-5 between Northgate and Lynnwood. While it is the major north-south route through the state of Washington, I-5 also serves a large commuter market between Snohomish and King counties and the City of Seattle. The corridor falls within an urban area that is constrained by Puget Sound to the west and Lake Washington to the east. There is a large north/south commuter market in this area that travels between the communities in Snohomish and King Counties, toward Seattle or north to Everett, where many of the region's jobs are located.

The North Corridor Transit Project is an element of Sound Transit's adopted Long-Range Plan and is part of the ST2 Plan for regional transit investments approved by voters in 2008. The project is also in the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Puget Sound Regional Council's *Transportation 2040*). All of these plans anticipate the eventual extension of mass transit service north to Everett, connecting to a regional system serving other markets to the south, such as University of Washington, Capitol Hill, downtown Seattle, and SeaTac.

The start of the EIS phase for the North Corridor Transit Project is building on the results of an Alternatives Analysis Sound Transit performed in 2010-2011 that included early public and agency scoping in October 2010. The Alternatives Analysis developed and evaluated a range of alternatives to improve transit in the corridor, and resulted in an Alternatives Analysis Report and SEPA Addendum that identified the most promising alternatives for further study. The Alternatives Analysis also served as an addendum to Sound Transit's Supplemental EIS on the Regional Transit Long-Range Plan (June 2005).

Figure 1 shows the overall schedule Sound Transit expects for the North Corridor project, from the initial planning and environmental review steps through to final design and construction, leading to the planned start of transit service in 2023.

Figure 1. North Corridor Transit Project Schedule



The Scoping Process

The NEPA and SEPA scoping process began with formal notices to prepare an EIS, accompanied by advertisements and other public notices and outreach materials. For NEPA, a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS was published in the Federal Register on

September 29, 2011. For SEPA, a scoping notice was published in the State's SEPA register on September 30, 2011. Sound Transit also provided links to the notices at www.soundtransit.org/NCTP.

The scoping comment period was held from September 30 to October 31, 2011. During this time, Sound Transit and FTA asked the public to provide comments on the proposed purpose and need statement, environmental issues for evaluation in the EIS, and the alternatives being considered for study in the draft EIS.

Scoping was conducted by Sound Transit and FTA in consultation with other agencies, including the Washington State Department of Transportation; Federal Highway Administration; the cities of Seattle, Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace, Edmonds, and Lynnwood; King and Snohomish counties; Community Transit; affected tribes; and other regional, state and federal agencies. The scoping approach was also developed to be consistent with FTA's regulations for implementing NEPA, as defined in 23 CFR 450.318(b)(2)(iv).

Notices and Advertisements

In addition to the formal EIS scoping notices, Sound Transit and FTA used several other public notice and involvement tools to notify and engage the public and agencies during scoping:

- Direct mail postcards to approximately 103,000 addresses in the corridor (with translated information also provided)
- Email notices on September 30 and October 6, 2011 to more than 1,000 addresses
- Advertisements in the Seattle Times and other print and online media
- Printed posters and postcards dropped off at many public locations in the corridor (such as at libraries, city halls, and community centers)
- Notices on Sound Transit's project website at www.soundtransit.org/NCTP, accompanied by a Scoping Information Report (September 2011)

The print advertisements were placed in the Seattle Times and local North Corridor area newspapers announcing the upcoming public meetings. Advertisements in print and online publications, along with a number of media stories, were published by:

- tu Decides
- Snohomish County Business Journal
- Publicola
- Seattle Transit Blog
- MLT News
- Shoreline News
- The Herald
- Progressive Railroading
- The Weekly Herald
- My Edmonds News

To help reach a full range of community members, meeting notification materials were translated into Spanish, Russian, traditional Chinese and Korean. Sound Transit also placed notices in online blogs, Sound Transit's Twitter feed, and Sound Transit's Facebook page. Staff prepared press releases to generate news articles to further create awareness about the project and its public involvement opportunities.

In addition, Sound Transit staff met with seven organizations and elected bodies (city councils) in the project area before or during the scoping period. During the scoping period, Sound Transit also conducted a live-streamed online panel discussion called "Tech Talk" on October 7th, which was focused on the results of the Alternatives Analysis. Tech Talk was a moderated discussion of comments and questions raised by on-line participants. The discussion covered the project background and schedule, the findings of the project's Alternatives Analysis, and the merits and attributes of potential light rail alternatives. It also covered issues such as land use, transportation performance, design, and environmental effects. This informational session was advertised by email (September 30 and October 6, 2011) and on local area transportation-related blogs. During the session, Sound Transit staff also encouraged the participants to attend the public scoping meetings and submit formal comments.

Background Materials

To provide additional information about why Sound Transit is proposing the North Corridor Transit Project and how the EIS will be conducted, the agency produced the following publications and made them available on the project website and at public meetings prior to the start of scoping:

- *Scoping Information Report*: a summary of the current environmental scoping effort, which provides a planning history of the project, the results of the recent Alternatives Analysis, the draft purpose and need statement, the range of alternatives being considered for study in the EIS, the potential environmental topics to be reviewed in the EIS, and the project schedule.
- *Draft Coordination Plan*: a summary of the plan to engage the public, agencies and tribes throughout the environmental review process.
- *Alternatives Analysis Report and SEPA Addendum*: a summary document and complete technical report describing the initial study Sound Transit conducted to define the most promising alternatives now being considered for further review in the EIS, along with alternatives to be dropped from further consideration.

Public and Agency Scoping Meetings

Three public meetings and one agency meeting were held during the scoping period. More than 240 people attended the public meetings. Staff from thirteen of the 40 invited agencies and tribes attended the agency meeting.

Public Meetings		
October 11, 2011 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.	Shoreline Conference Center 18560 1 st Avenue NE Shoreline, WA 98155	100 (86 signed in)
October 13, 2011 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.	Embassy Suites 20610 44th Avenue W Lynnwood, WA 98036	55 (43 signed in)
October 18, 2011 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.	Ingraham High School 1819 N. 135 th Street Seattle, WA 98133	30 (26 signed in)
Agency and Tribal Meeting		
October 11, 2011 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.	Shoreline Conference Center 18560 1 st Avenue NE Shoreline, WA 98155	13 agencies

Public Meetings

The public meetings used an “open house” format combined with a presentation and Question and Answer session. Each meeting had a sign in area, a comment area, and information stations with display posters and background written materials (such as the project’s *Scoping Information Report*, *Alternatives Analysis Report* and *SEPA Addendum*, and fact sheets). There were also several interactive stations to help the public note specific areas of the corridor. Each station had project staff to answer questions and listen to participants.



In the presentations, Sound Transit and FTA staff described the project and its history to date, and took questions from the audience. Some of the more common topics were:

- Station locations
- Park and rides
- Service levels
- Elevated versus surface sections
- Federal funding
- Project schedule
- Alternatives Analysis findings
- Bus service, including east-west connections
- Ridership
- Land use plans and transit-oriented development
- Economic and environmental impacts



Agency Meeting

The agency meeting had a similar format to the public meetings, but was designed to help agencies and tribes identify their level of interest and future involvement in the EIS process as the project moves forward. (There are additional federal requirements guiding how agencies and tribes are to be engaged in the EIS process, as described in the project's *Draft Coordination Plan*.) Thirteen agencies attended the agency scoping meeting. See Attachment B for a list of attendees.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

From September 30 through October 31, 2011, Sound Transit and FTA received 69 comment submittals from individuals, 14 comment submittals from jurisdictions and agencies, and 3 from organizations.

The majority of the comments Sound Transit and FTA received were positive.

All the jurisdictions, agencies and organizations with written comments either supported the proposed project or offered advice on the project's next steps into the environmental process. None of these parties were opposed to the proposed project.

Seven of the agencies and jurisdictions specifically indicated support for an I-5 alternative, as did all of the organizations that commented.

One agency (King County Department of Transportation) supported carrying a SR 99 alternative and an I-5 alternative into the EIS, primarily because of the potential differences in transit-oriented development potential for the alignments. (After the close of the comment

period, the King County Department of Transportation wrote an additional letter noting its preference for an I-5 alternative.)

Several other agencies, including the cities of Seattle, Edmonds, Lynnwood, Mountlake Terrace, Everett, and Community Transit, noted concerns about a SR 99 elevated alternative's impacts, costs, ridership or ability to meet other purpose and need objectives.

More than 75 percent of the public's (individuals) comments supported the proposed project or one or more of the light rail alternatives Sound Transit and FTA are considering for the EIS.

About 45 percent of the commenters expressed support for a specific alignment, including one or both of the alternatives.

From all general public comments, about 35 percent supported an I-5 light rail alternative, while 3 percent were opposed.

About 13 percent supported a SR 99 light rail alternative, and 7 percent were opposed.

About 5 percent (or 3 of the commenters) were opposed to the proposed project, including one party who preferred Bus Rapid Transit instead of light rail. The remaining 21 percent did not indicate a clear preference or focused on environmental or other issues.

The other comments varied, but included suggestions about route or station locations, environmental or land use factors, and the purpose and need for the project. A number of commenters asked for Sound Transit to move ahead more quickly to build the project.

Comments from the General Public

During the scoping period, Sound Transit and FTA received 69 comments from members of the public through written forms at the public meeting, the online form, email, or direct mail.

Fifty-two of the comments indicated general support for the project. Twenty-four expressed support for the I-5 alignment, while eight supported the SR 99 alignment.

Three individuals opposed the project as a whole. One person opposed Sound Transit in general and the potential for new taxes, stating that light rail has not been cost effective. Two people who opposed light rail, expressed support for a bus system or bus-only lanes.

The 17 comments supporting an I-5 alignment focused on travel time benefits, the problems of congestion, and the need for enough parking to meet demand.

The two comments opposed to an I-5 alignment suggested the project's focus should be on creating more opportunities for transit-oriented development and related environmental benefits, including energy savings and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. They believed SR 99 offered more potential for this, while I-5 offered less or no potential.

The eight comments opposed to an SR 99 alignment noted the environmental impacts of construction, particularly economic impacts to businesses, but they also cited cost as a factor.

Many of the remaining comments from the public provided general opinions about the proposed project and its purpose, suggestions about the alternatives, and primary areas of environmental concern, including wetlands, noise and vibration, visual impacts and construction.

There were only a few comments about the project's "purpose and need", which is the formal statement of why the project is proposed and why Sound Transit believes it is needed. However, a number of commenters described why they supported the project and how they expected to use it. A summary of these comments is provided below.

General Project

- Project schedule is too long
- Adequate commuter parking must be included; some park-and-rides already at capacity (for instance, Lynnwood Transit Center)
- East/west transit service is important to get commuters to light rail stations
- At-grade trains are slow trains, so ours must not be at-grade
- Need good light rail service all day, not just commuter times
- Will coach amenities include tables and outlets, comfortable seats, and safe standing room?
- Initial train service was minimal, parking was minimal, and travel time was excessive
- Travel efficiency and cost are most important considerations
- Prefer route with more car parking and stations
- Consider Shoreline's "town center" density plans and how that would affect ridership forecasts
- Make sure stations are walkable and accessible, including some with no parking
- The project should emphasize benefits to transit-oriented development, walkability, community equity, environmental and other factors, in addition to transportation

Suggestions about Alternatives

- Add station at 130th to I-5 alignment
- Reconsider stations that offer better walkability than those just along I-5 interchanges
- Reconsider stations at 15th/145th and 15th/175th stations that offer better walkability and transit-oriented development (TOD) than those along I-5
- Lynnwood Transit Center access needs modification, and needs more walkable areas – hard to access in SOV
- Light rail should extend to Alderwood Mall, Lynnwood Convention Center, and Lynnwood City Center

- Place a walkable, accessible station closer to Lynnwood City Center or Alderwood Mall
- Extend as far north as possible, such as to Ash Way to serve more commuters and reduce traffic at Lynnwood
- Use Interurban Trail land for alignment; already paid for and dedicated for transit
- 220th & SR 99 should be served; highest residential and employment density in south Snohomish County
- Northgate park-and-ride should be rebuilt in manner of Hammersmith Station in London, with better connections, mixed uses, and amenities
- Extend SR 99 alignment into Edmonds/Lynnwood with some combination of 208th, Interurban corridor, and 200th St to Lynnwood transit center
- Look at placing SR 99 alignment diagonally through NW Hospital campus to reduce travel distance.
- Consider different Shoreline station location; such as at the Shoreline Park-and-Ride, near 185th, and near the urban villages identified by the Shoreline community. Stations should emphasize walk up, bike up, and transfers, not huge parking lots
- Place pedestrian-only stop near I-5 & 196th to be consistent with Lynnwood's City Center Plan
- Park-and-rides should have: bus stops, bicycle spaces, electric vehicle outlets, camera monitoring for security, snack bar, restrooms, alternative energy for power needs, pay phone
- Consider staggered stops; run more trains but skip some stations
- SR 99 alignment should be placed on west side of road
- Consider a mix of Express Bus on I-5 between Lynnwood and Northgate, linked to a limited stop light rail route using SR 99 to connect Lynnwood to Northgate

Concerns about Impacts

- Noise, traffic, parks and visual impacts from light rail along I-5, where noise and traffic impacts are already high
- Parking impacts if stations do not provide enough parking, especially in areas where demand already exceeds supply
- Impacts to businesses along a SR 99 alignment, including displacements and loss of business (also noted as reasons a SR 99 alternative should not be studied further)
- Impacts in Lynnwood due to increased traffic and pedestrians
- General project impacts on residences, but especially noise, visual, changes to sound walls or access
- Noise and vibration impacts on residences
- Property acquisition process questions
- Streams and wetlands adjacent to I-5, including at NE 145th Street, near Mountlake Terrace, and near Lynnwood

- Wildlife – preserve greenbelts and/or avenues used to navigate the area
- Impacts of increased pressure for growth around station areas, with further impacts to the remaining natural areas

Purpose and Need

- Include TOD and environmental benefits as a key purpose of the system
- Endorse community equity and benefits elements to low income and minority populations as part of the project purpose
- Endorse the need for improvements to travel time, speed, reliability for transit riders

Comments from Agencies and Jurisdictions

Fourteen agencies provided comments during the scoping period. This included nine local jurisdictions (city or county governments or districts), a transit agency, one regional agency, one state agency, and two federal agencies.

Local Jurisdictions

City of Edmonds

The City's letter discussed the Alternatives Analysis and voiced general support for the project. The letter noted the City may later indicate a preference for an alignment alternative. However, if a SR 99 alternative is included in the EIS, the City would want to have the option for a route to continue along SR 99 north of 205th/244th Street into the City of Edmonds. (After the close of the comment period, the City provided an updated letter identifying I-5 as their preferred alternative.)

City of Everett

Everett's letter encouraged including an I-5 light rail alignment in the EIS. The letter noted concerns with SR 99 impacts, including business disruption, higher costs, lower ridership, and lack of connection to existing transit facilities investments such as at NE 145th Street. The City encouraged Sound Transit to select an alignment that would support light rail to Snohomish County and Everett, with the least cost, highest ridership, and best chance for receiving federal funding.

City of Lynnwood

The City noted its longstanding support for the North Corridor project and a regional transit investment to connect to the city center as a regionally designated growth center. The City included its adopted resolution endorsing an I-5 light rail alternative, noting overall transportation and environmental performance and cost effectiveness. The City also identified concerns with a SR 99 alignment, including lower overall benefits, higher costs, conflicts with Bus Rapid Transit investments, impacts, and delays or conflicts with future plans

to extend service to Everett. The City noted its interest in a future station closer to the core of the city center area. Lynnwood also provided comments for the EIS's treatment of impacts, including construction, parks, and property acquisitions.

City of Mountlake Terrace

Mountlake Terrace's letter voiced continued support for placing light rail along the I-5 corridor, and encouraged Sound Transit to identify an I-5 light rail alternative as a preliminary preferred alternative. It also identified concerns for the higher costs and impacts of a SR 99 alternative. The letter noted the I-5 alternative's ability to achieve the greatest number of riders at the smallest capital cost, and endorsed the general findings of the Alternatives Analysis. The City also noted the importance of a light rail investment to its vision for creating a vibrant, mixed use area within walking distance to a future light rail station near I-5 and 236th Street SW, and identified its own planning and environmental efforts toward creating transit-oriented development nearby.

City of Seattle

The City's letter voiced support for the project's proposed purpose and need statement and acknowledged Sound Transit's coordination with corridor jurisdictions during the Alternatives Analysis. The City concurred with the Alternatives Analysis findings, and supported limiting the range of alternatives to an I-5 light rail alternative and a no-build alternative if Sound Transit identifies an I-5 light rail alternative as the locally preferred alternative.

City of Shoreline

The City of Shoreline provided a detailed letter attaching its scoping comments on impacts and issues for Sound Transit to consider in the EIS, along with adopted Guiding Principles the City plans to use for its own decisions about light rail. The letter indicated that the Shoreline City Council will be identifying its preference for a specific alignment later in November, but they were very supportive of the proposed extension of light rail to Shoreline. The City's Guiding Principles include transportation, land use, economic, social, cost and impact considerations. The City's scoping comments addressed issues such as potential alignments and station locations (including studying a potential station at I-5/NE 185th Street on the west side of I-5), costs, travel times, ridership, access (including avoiding or upgrading bike/pedestrian crossing the freeway at NE 195th Street), social equity, land use, and transit feeder service. It also discussed noise, visual and traffic impacts and mitigation measures. (The City also provided a similar letter to the Chairman of the Sound Transit Board. After the close of the scoping period, the City wrote an additional letter to inform Sound Transit and FTA that the City Council had identified the I-5 alignment as the City's preferred alignment.)

Lynnwood Public Facilities District

This City development district encouraged Sound Transit to site a station within walking distance of the Lynnwood Convention Center and noted the importance of the center to the economic vitality of Lynnwood.

County and Regional Agencies

Puget Sound Regional Council

The regional council provided a detailed letter noting the importance of high capacity transit to the region's integrated strategy for growth management, transportation and economic development. The letter suggested additional factors to consider for the purpose and need and related objectives, including the ability to focus growth to create walkable, compact and transit-oriented communities and to support regional growth and activity areas. In addition, PSRC provided comments on the scope of EIS alternatives and analysis, including ways to measure access by mode, a variety of station sites and attributes, and the identification of potential mitigation measures.

King County

The King County Department of Transportation provided scoping comments on the purpose and need, range of alternatives, environmental factors and potential project evaluation criteria. The County suggested expanding the project's purpose to include providing a catalyst for desired growth, such as walkable, transit-oriented communities. The County's comments on alternatives supported including both the I-5 and the SR 99 alternatives. The letter suggested a range of alternatives was needed to help weigh the balance between leveraging existing transportation investments against the different types of land use along an I-5 versus a SR 99 alignment. The County's comments on alternatives recommended evaluating both I-5 and SR 99 in the EIS, and a range of alternative station locations along SR 99.

For the I-5 Alternative, the County suggested station locations should be evaluated at NE 155th Street and NE 130th Street. (After the close of the comment period, the County wrote an additional letter noting its preference for an I-5 alternative because of the I-5 alignment's higher ridership, lower cost, and because it would complement the County's and Community Transit's investment in bus rapid transit service on SR 99. King County stated they plan to implement the RapidRide E line on SR 99 between downtown Seattle and the King/Snohomish counties in 2013.)

For the SR 99 Alternative, the County suggested possible station locations should be evaluated at:

- NW Hospital at N 115th Street
- N 130th Street

- N 145th Street
- N 160th Street
- N 175th Street
- N 185th Street
- Shoreline Park-and-Ride
- SW 216th Street, and
- SW 202nd Street

Snohomish County

Snohomish County's letter indicated overall support for the project but did not specifically endorse an alternative. The County suggested considering an array of factors in analyzing EIS alternatives, such as the ability to support long range plans to extend to Everett, travel time and ridership, number of stations, and regional service versus a local service focus. The letter also discussed station-area issues, including multimodal access (east-west transit access, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities), evaluating impacts to local land uses, park and ride capacity, and local land use effects.

Community Transit

Community Transit's letter thanked Sound Transit for engaging them in the Alternatives Analysis and emphasized their interest in fulfilling a shared vision for effective regional and local transit. The letter voiced support for the purpose and need and noted the importance of the regional investment to allow more of their resources to focus on connecting centers and feeding the regional system. The agency also supported the I-5 alternative because it best supports the purpose and need, and they identified concerns with the ability of SR 99 elevated light rail alternative to efficiently and cost-effectively meet future travel demand. The letter concluded with comments on the Alternatives Analysis report and Community Transit's services, facilities and plans.

State

Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

The Department wrote regarding its role under the National Historic Preservation Act and related federal regulation and asked for continued opportunities to be involved as the project develops.

Federal

Environmental Protection Agency

The EPA's letter was received from Region 10 in Seattle, and focused on environmental scoping and analysis issues and procedures. EPA provided a list of additional resources to

consider in developing methods and conducting the analysis. The agency offered suggestions on areas such as indirect and cumulative effects, water quality, aquatic resources, climate change, ecosystems, air quality, Environmental Justice, endangered species, tribal consultations, historic properties, and human health.

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

The Advisory Council acknowledged the invitation to participate in the EIS, offered general guidance for the project's review of historic resources effects, and noted its ability to participate in the project later if impacts to historic resources are identified.

Organizations

Snohomish County Committee for Improved Transportation

The Committee expressed support for light rail and the I-5 alignment. Cost and travel time are of particular interest to the organization.

Shoreline Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors agreed to only support the I-5 alignment for light rail, noting they found it to be the best option for the businesses and citizens of Shoreline.

Snohomish County Infrastructure Coordination Committee

The Committee indicated that the I-5 alternative has clear advantages for the County, including cost, feasibility, and connections to regional centers. They also suggested that going into the EIS process with a preliminary preferred alternative will save time and money.

Project Correspondence Received After the Close of the Scoping Comment Period

After the close of the comment period (October 31, 2011), Sound Transit received additional letters from six parties addressing scoping-related issues. Several of these parties had submitted letters earlier during the comment period (City of Shoreline, City of Edmonds, and King County Department of Transportation) and wanted to provide updates or new information. While the scoping summary does not count these letters received after the end of the comment period as formal scoping comments, their key points are summarized below.

City of Shoreline

Following up on an earlier letter provided during scoping, the City of Shoreline wrote to inform Sound Transit and FTA that the Shoreline City Council had unanimously identified the I-5 alignment as the City's preferred alignment on November 14, 2011.

Washington State Department of Transportation

WSDOT provided a letter thanking Sound Transit for its coordination during the Alternatives Analysis and stating the concept placing light rail within the I-5 right-of-way would be a feasible alternative for further study in the EIS. WSDOT also emphasized the importance of ensuring safe access to and from light rail stations and avoiding adverse impacts to highway operations.

King County Department of Transportation

The King County Department of Transportation provided an additional letter to convey its support for the I-5 alternative identified in the Alternatives Analysis. The Department noted that its scoping period letter discussing both SR 99 and I-5 alternatives was focusing on strategies for improving the EIS if either alternative was chosen, and did not indicate a preferred alternative. The letter also described the benefits of the I-5 alternative, including its potential to complement bus rapid transit investments already being made along the SR 99 corridor.

City of Edmonds

The City supplemented its earlier scoping period letter with a letter to the Sound Transit Board conveying its support and preference for an I-5 alternative, based on the I-5 alternative described in the Alternatives Analysis. The City noted the 2008 public vote approving Sound Transit investments that included the light rail extension to Lynnwood and also identified the benefits of the I-5 alternative.

Edmonds School District

The school district wrote regarding its plans for three properties near the corridor and encouraged the project to develop alternatives that could avoid impacting the properties. While the District did not take a position on any of the alternatives under consideration, it stated that the properties were important components of its long-range property plan approved by voters in 2006. The District's properties include land to be developed as a District Support Site, located south of the Lynnwood Transit Center; the "Melody Hill" site located on the southwest corner of I-5/SW 220th Street SW in Mountlake Terrace; and the Evergreen Elementary School site at 236th Street SW in Mountlake Terrace. The District noted the latter two properties were important for revenue generation for the District's capital program.

Aurora Avenue Merchants Association

The association, which represents 515 business members located along SR 99 between 65th Street NW and 145th Street NW, wrote to express support for an I-5 light rail alignment and opposition to a SR 99 alignment. The association noted costs, travel time, environmental

impacts, and construction and community disruption impacts as key factors behind its position.

NEXT STEPS

Identifying the Draft EIS Alternatives and the Scope of the EIS – The public and agency comments received during scoping will help Sound Transit (at the direction of the Sound Transit Board) and FTA finalize the purpose and need for the project and identify the issues and alternatives to be considered in the Draft EIS.

In late 2011 or early 2012, the Sound Transit Board is expected to consider a motion to provide direction on the range of alternatives to be studied in the Draft EIS. The consideration of any motions will be conducted in regularly scheduled meetings of the Board and will be open to the public.

Draft EIS – Upon direction of the Sound Transit Board and in consultation with FTA, work on the Draft EIS is expected to begin in early 2012. The Draft EIS will take about 12 to 18 months to complete and issue for public and agency review, leading to publication in about mid-2013. The Draft EIS will be available for a minimum 45-day public comment period that will include public hearings.

After the close of the Draft EIS public comment period, the Sound Transit Board will consider public comments as well as the information in the Draft EIS when it identifies the preferred alternative for the Final EIS.

Final EIS – The Final EIS will complete the analysis of the preferred alternative along with the other proposed build alternatives and No-Build Alternative, and it will respond to the comments received on the Draft EIS. Work on the Final EIS is expected to begin in late 2013 with publication scheduled for 2014.

Record of Decision – After the publication of the Final EIS, FTA is expected to release a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD documents findings by FTA that the project has met the requirements of NEPA and related environmental regulations. It describes the project, alternatives considered, the public opportunity to comment, the public comments and responses, the basis for the decision to approve the project, and mitigation measures required.

Attachment A – Parties Providing Scoping Comments

Scoping comments were received between September 30, 2011 and October 31, 2011 from the following agencies, organizations, and public individuals.

Federal Agency

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)

United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10 (EPA)

State Agency

Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Regional Agency

Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

Local Agency

City of Edmonds

City of Lynnwood, Community Development

City of Mountlake Terrace

City of Shoreline

City of Seattle

King County

Lynnwood Public Facilities District

Snohomish County

Organization

Shoreline Chamber of Commerce

Snohomish County Tomorrow, Infrastructure Coordination Committee

Economic Alliance & Snohomish County Committee for Improved Transportation

Public

Allen, Jim	Kelly, Shay
Anonymous 1	Knoke, Mark
Anonymous 2	Kulseth, Greg
Anonymous 3	Laura
Anonymous 4	Lawson, Rich
Ballard, Marilyn	Levin, Joe
Battey, Chris & Sora	Link, S.T
Bauer, Andrew	Lumansoc, Gerry
Beisse, Mark	Matway, Melanie
Betz-Zall, Jonathan	McCaig, Gary
Bond, Donna	Miner, Randy
Buss, Alison	mlumansoc
Callahan, Kevin S.	Morgan, Paul
Cannon, Ed & Doris	Moss, Donna
Cecil, Michael	Murti, Deven Bjorn
Chamness, David	O'Donald, Julie
Clute, Brian	Palmer, Paula
DeRepentigny, Mike	r2d2griff
Dewhirst, John S.	Peterson, Dan
DiPeso, Wendy	Peterson, Jan
Donohue, Kellen	Rocco, Frank
Fraker, Tracy	Rogers, Mark
Frare, Therese	Shaw, Jim
Fulford-Foster, Jeremiah	SIG516AR
Genin, Laura	Sinnott, Larry
Gilcreest, Ralph	Spinney, Tom
Goodman, Eric	S.R
Gosse, J.	Stumpf, Fred L.
Gould, Tim	talbotjs
Gstead	Usen, Mike
Hale, Patricia	Wasikowski, Joseph
Halvorson, Erik	Wijayratne, Ramona
Ham, Ken	Wilkie, Mary Anne
Henthorn, Carl	Zeitlen, Patty
Ingreham, Larry	

Attachment B – Agency Meeting Attendees

Agency Scoping Meeting
 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
 October 11, 2011
 Shoreline Conference Center

Attendees:

Name	Title	Organization
Allan Giffen	Director, Planning and Community Development	City of Everett
Tom Hingson	Director, Transportation Services	Everett Transit
Carrie Deichl	Environmental Protection Specialist	FTA
Dan Drais	Environmental Protection Specialist	FTA
Gil Cerise	Senior Transit Planner	PSRC
Janiene Lambert	City Center Program Manager	City of Lynnwood
Steve Butler	Director, Community Development	City of Mill Creek
Bert Hauss	Transportation Engineer	City of Edmonds
Stephen Clifton	Director, Economic Development	City of Edmonds
Liz Gotterer	Transit Planner	King County Metro
Mike Usen	Senior Transit Environmental Planner	King County Metro
Jay Larson	Transportation Specialist	Snohomish County
David True	Manager, Capital Development	Community Transit
June Devoll	Manager, Strategic Planning and Grants	Community Transit
Alicia McIntire	Senior Transportation Planner	City of Shoreline
Dylan Counts	Sound Transit Liaison	WSDOT