



## East Link Extension



July 31, 2014

## Rainier 60% Design Open House Public Involvement Summary

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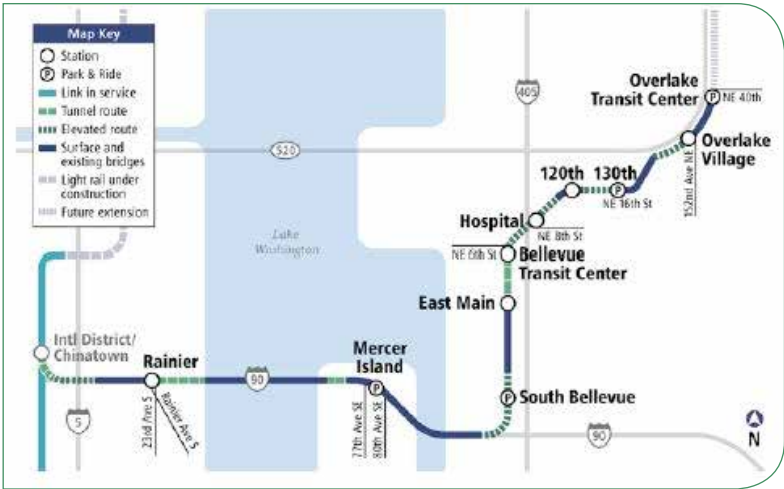
# Background

East Link Extension is a key element of the regional mass transit system approved by voters in 2008. This 14-mile light rail line will benefit local communities and support regional growth with fast, frequent and reliable light rail service, connecting Seattle to the Eastside’s biggest population and employment centers.

The project builds on the Link light rail system running between Sea-Tac Airport and downtown Seattle and the University Link and S. 200th Link Extensions that are scheduled to open in 2016. East Link is part of the new light rail extensions being built north, south and east from Seattle. When East Link opens around 2023, 10 stations, serving Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue, South Bellevue and Overlake in Redmond will

become a part of a regional light rail system stretching more than 50 miles. By 2030, about 50,000 riders will use East Link every day.

East Link is advancing in final design. During this phase, project architects and engineers define the light rail system, determining the technical specifications for the stations, bridges, tracks and other elements as well as construction methods and sequencing. Sound Transit hosted a public meeting in September 2013 to share 30 percent final design plans in the Rainier area, and we have since advanced design to approximately 60 percent completion. There are multiple opportunities for the community to help influence design elements and stay informed as East Link moves forward.



## Timeline



# I-90 Segment: Seattle

Light rail travels east from Seattle across Lake Washington on the I-90 floating bridge. East Link serves the Seattle segment with a station platform situated in the center roadway of I-90 with entrances at Rainier and 23rd Avenues South.

## Overview

On July 31, 2014, Sound Transit hosted an open house to inform the public of design progress on the Seattle portion of East Link Extension, including the Rainier station. The meeting served to educate the community on design details, provide an overview of the project schedule, benefits, and final design elements; and present and gather comments on 60 percent design plans for the Seattle segment. The open house was held at the Northwest African American Museum in Seattle from 5 to 7 p.m.

Postcards mailed to over 17,000 Seattle residents and businesses.

## Notification

The open house was publicized through the following channels:

- Display advertisements in the Capitol Hill Times, Korea Daily, La Raza, Mercer Island Reporter, Phuong Dong Times, Russian World, Seattle Chinese News, Bellevue Reporter, Capitol Hill Seattle, Crosscut, Seattle Transit Blog, and the Rainier Valley Post.
- Postcards mailed to over 17,000 residents and businesses
- A press release to local papers and blogs
- Email notification to approximately 6,000 subscribers of the East Link Extension listserv
- Announcements on the Sound Transit project Web page
- Announcement on the Sound Transit Facebook page to highlight the open house and I-90 animation
- Flyers were distributed to riders at the I-90 flyer stop at Rainier Avenue South during morning and evening peak commute times

**JOIN US JULY 31**  
**Seattle I-90 Neighborhoods East Link Extension Open House**

Sound Transit has reached an important milestone! Design plans for the **Rainier station** are 60 percent complete. The open house is your opportunity to review current designs, meet the East Link project team and provide feedback.

Learn about:

- Station design updates
- Public art
- Landscaping
- Pre-construction information

**SOUNDTRANSIT**

PLEASE JOIN US:  
**Thursday, July 31, 2014 • 5 - 7 p.m.**  
Presentation begins at 5:30 p.m.

**Northwest African American Museum**  
2300 S Massachusetts St.  
Seattle, WA 98144

Learn more and submit comments online at [soundtransit.org/eastlink](http://soundtransit.org/eastlink) or contact Sound Transit at 206-398-LINK, [eastlink@soundtransit.org](mailto:eastlink@soundtransit.org).

To request information in alternative formats or accommodations for persons with disabilities, call 1-800-201-4900/TTY Relay: 711 or email [accessibility@soundtransit.org](mailto:accessibility@soundtransit.org).

**Sound Transit**  
July 29

Here's an exclusive of the East Link I-90 segment, including the Rainier and Mercer Island stations. Join us at the July 31st open house for info & more: <http://www.soundtransit.org/About-Sound-Transit/News-and-events/Calendar/East-Link-07312014>

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# Open house overview

Approximately 55 people attended the open house to learn about updated design plans for the Seattle segment and provide comments. Attendees were greeted by project staff, asked to sign-in and provided with a Community Guide to Final Design, I-90 segment fact sheet, and comment forms. Display boards and roll plots featured information about East Link, the final design process and updated design plans for the Seattle segment, including the Rainier station.

An overview presentation was held at 5:30 p.m. Project staff were available throughout the meeting to answer questions and explain design details to the public. Attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts on the design plans. All meeting materials and electronic versions of the comment forms were made available on the East Link project website following the open house.



# Comment Summary

The following section is a summary of comments Sound Transit received at the open house, informational tables and through an online comment form between July 31 and August 15, 2014.

## Rainier Station Design

- *General comments on station design, features and amenities:*
  - *Great job!*
  - *Great work! Pay more to accelerate this – we need this line!*
  - *Make alignment coming in/out of [International District Station] as straight as possible.*
  - *I don't see a restroom in the plans.*
  - *Add a platform and some benches to the design.*
  - *Ensure that Metro and Sound Transit coordinate payment methods, ORCA.*
  - *The Rainier entrance looks like it's going to be a lot more inviting.*
  - *West walking lane – for disabled folks with trouble walking long distances, add benches or other assistance.*
  - *There needs to be more landscaping, particularly at the Rainier entrance to make it more inviting.*
  - *This looks great, I look forward to using it.*
- *Interest in reflecting community character in station design:*
  - *It should reflect the distinct nature of the neighborhood at present and the rich Italian flavor that was the Garlic Gulch of the past, and the musical influence of Jimi Hendrix, Ray Charles, and Quincy Jones.*
  - *Some psychedelic sidewalks and nice tree planting.*
  - *Janei Hendrix, CEO of Experience Hendrix, has offered Jimi Hendrix lyrics and artwork for use in the artwork at the station.*
- *Interest in integrating sustainable elements of the natural environment:*
  - *I like the green space.*
  - *I am pleased the design incorporates sustainable design elements. I would like to see a cohesive color and design at both head houses in addition to signage for the Northwest African American Museum, Jimi Hendrix, and Sam Smith parks.*
  - *There should be more integration of the station into the existing greenbelt.*
  - *I'm curious to know if the South Sound Wall can be moved further south to expose more planting at the Rainier Station.*
- *Interest in safety at and around the station:*
  - *More should be done to make the west entrance feel safe!*
  - *I'm concerned about crossing safety, riding safety, and the potential for hiding places.*
  - *Concerned about crossing the track from western walkway – provide more or other security to ensure folks don't sprint in front of moving transit.*
  - *There should be a safe connection to Metro on Rainier Avenue.*
  - *I'm concerned about the track crossing but at least people don't have to cross vehicle and light rail traffic like the valley.*
  - *Investigate safety of mixed-use path alignment at Rainier where it curves back toward Hiawatha. Sight distance is suboptimal and grade makes bikes FAST.*

- *Interest in pedestrian and bicycle amenities and ease of access to the station:*
  - *Ensure that there will be good signage on the bike path for both riders and walkers.*
  - *Please assure a safe, fast crossing of bikes and pedestrians at 23rd Ave Portal. This is a vital bus transfer.*
  - *Investigate safety of mixed-use path alignment at Rainier where it curves back toward Hiawatha. Sight distance is suboptimal and grade makes bikes FAST.*
  - *Need to maintain Mountains to Sound trail and ped/ bike access on 23rd Ave.*
  - *I would like to see a stronger connection to existing bike trails, pedestrian pathways, and clear signaling at the 23rd Avenue entry way.*
  - *Even more bike storage please.*
  - *Pedestrian access from Beacon Hill and West of Rainier should be improved.*
  - *There should be more coverage/shelter for pedestrians.*
  - *Include signage on where to find the bike cage as approaching from the west.*
- *Interest in including retail/vendor space at the station:*
  - *Would love to see retail/vibrant activity around station entrances.*
  - *Facilitating retail activity should be a priority for the design team and Sound Transit in order to create the best station possible.*
  - *There should be alcoves built into the infrastructure to accommodate "fast food" vendors in all seasons.*
  - *Outdoor seating plaza area, perhaps a café.*
  - *This area is not safe. What it needs is more reason for foot traffic.*
- *Interest in addressing vehicle parking around the station:*
  - *Need parking zone pass for current residents.*
  - *Make it so that hide-n-ride is as reduced as possible.*
  - *I am concerned about parking on S. Atlantic, 21st, and 22nd. Our neighborhood just to the south of the station can barely handle the parking needs of the residents on 22nd – 21st and 23rd between Massachusetts and Atlantic.*
  - *Build a Park and Ride in the central Seattle area.*



## Construction Impacts

- *General interest in the start of construction and comments about impacts:*
  - *Why hasn't there been any track laid down yet?*
  - *I am so excited about this! You can use my bathroom for free while building!*
  - *Noise and access concerns for residents on S. Atlantic Street.*
  - *Are there going to be construction impacts to the bike and pedestrian path at the 23rd Ave entrance? There are currently blind/deaf users who rely on that path for regular travel.*
  - *I just learned that East Link construction would stop all the buses that we take from Eastgate to Downtown Seattle. I do not think this will be a benefit for riders.*

## Tell us about yourself! How do you plan to use East Link?

Do you live or work near the Rainier station?

Yes - 9



No - 3



How often do you anticipate using the station?

Never - 2



Less than once a month - 1



A few times a month - 1



Weekly - 3



Daily - 3



Do you intend to use light rail for daily commuting, special events, or both?

Daily commuting - 2



Special events - 4



Both - 4



How do you plan on accessing the station?

Walk - 7



Drive - 2



Bus - 5



Bike - 4



Passenger drop off - 2





## Permanent station naming

A separate comment form was provided to gather input on permanent station names for the Rainier station. Sound Transit requested that station names reflect the neighborhood environment, avoid commercial references, comply with ADA guidelines, and follow Board Policy requirements for station naming. Following the meeting, an online survey was posted to the project website. A total of 40 responses were received. The following is a summary of public feedback on permanent station names.

- *What is your preference for the Rainier station name?*
  - *Jimi Hendrix Park Station - 20*
  - *Judkins Park Station - 12*
  - *Other -*
    - *Jimi Station - 1*
    - *Jimi Hendrix Station - 1*
    - *Gateway to the West Station - 1*
    - *East Portal Station - 1*
    - *Rainier Vista Station - 1*
    - *Rainier Station – 4*
    - *I-90/Rainier – 1*
    - *Chief Sealth - 1*
- *Station naming comments:*
  - *Jimi Hendrix Park is too obscure for many people. Judkins Park is much better for identifying the neighborhood around the station.*
  - *Jimi Hendrix Park is a great addition to the neighborhood, but it should not overshadow other notable features of the area.*
  - *Honestly, I think “Rainier Avenue Station” is more appropriate for locating the station in a geographical context, but in the end, I think it would be just plain fun to have a station named after one of the best musicians in Seattle’s history.*
  - *Judkins Park better reflects the name for the entire area, not just a park.*
  - *I prefer Jimi Hendrix Park station out the available choice but I think it should be shortened.*
  - *Jimi Hendrix station! Awesome tie to the neighborhood and park where he lived.*
  - *Rainier Avenue runs all the way from Renton to Rainier and South Jackson – close to the International District, factor that into the name.*



## Information Tables

Outreach staff hosted information tables in the Seattle I-90 neighborhood the week after the open house to provide additional opportunities for community members to meet project staff, review open house materials and ask questions about the updated station design plans. Informational materials, including copies of the display boards, handouts and comment forms from the July 31 open house were available. Outreach staff spoke directly with interested community members. Additional passersby looked at the East Link Overview and Seattle I-90 station rendering display boards and were aware of the project.

- *Locations:*
  - *Judkins St. Café, 8/5/2014, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.*
  - *Artspace Hiawatha, 8/7/2014, 2 - 4 p.m.*

## Next Steps

Sound Transit is working to advance design of the Seattle segment from 60 to 90 percent completion. The next opportunity to provide formal public comment will occur at the conclusion of final design, anticipated for the first half of 2015.

## Stay Involved

Visit the project website for the latest news:  
[soundtransit.org/eastlink](http://soundtransit.org/eastlink)

Request a briefing for your organization:  
Contact Sound Transit Community Outreach staff at [eastlink@soundtransit.org](mailto:eastlink@soundtransit.org) or **206-398-LINK**.

Subscribe to the project listserv:  
[soundtransit.org/subscribe-to-alerts](http://soundtransit.org/subscribe-to-alerts)







*WEST WALKWAY LOOKING TOWARD WEST ENTRY*



*ENTRY AT RAINIER AVENUE S.*

