Realignment public engagement

Sound Transit Board — 5/27/21
Realignment public engagement

• More than a year of continuing jurisdictional and stakeholder engagement.
• Community listening sessions to supplement equity analysis.
• April online open house to inform public and seek input via survey.
• Full report provided to Board members and posted to soundtransit.org/realignment
Jurisdictional and stakeholder engagement & community listening sessions
Jurisdictional and stakeholder briefings

- May 2020 online town hall with 78 elected officials and staff.
- 50+ briefings with city councils, city/county staff, commissions and regional elected officials.
- Approx. 55 stakeholder briefings with chambers of commerce, health care industry leaders, rotaries, transportation advocates, and accessibility advisers.
- 70+ letters and emails to Board and/or agency leadership.
Jurisdictional and stakeholder input

- Commitment to completing projects as soon as possible.
- Willingness to support work to close affordability gap.
- Prioritize projects with highest affordable housing potential.
- Prioritize projects in transit-reliant communities.
- Ensure ST2 projects are completed.
- Protect accessibility of projects and system.
- Consider expected regional job growth and potential for more revenue in ST financial plan.
- Questions about what decisions are made during realignment vs. at project level.
Community listening sessions

- 28 representatives of organizations working with communities most affected by institutional and systemic racism and other forms of oppression and potentially impacted by program realignment decisions.

- Asked for input to supplement equity analysis and online survey:
  - "What are important destinations for your community?"
  - "Would planned ST projects support your access to these destinations and resources?"
  - "What would you like the Board to understand before delaying, phasing or modifying future projects?"
**Community listening sessions insights**

- Delaying projects that serve communities of color erodes trust, doesn't consider systemic racism borne by communities.
- Community input can expire if planning/service timeline is extended.
- Use any extra time to ensure future stations/services reflect community values and needs.
- Minimize construction impact timeframe; coordinate with other capital projects in the area.
- Make light rail more welcoming with accessible how-to-ride resources for aging, low-income, unsheltered populations, non-English speakers and communities of color.
- Consider community representation on the Board.
Snohomish County insights

- North corridor communities have waited a long time for light rail.
- Many government and human services at Everett Station -- connect as soon as possible.
- If Everett Link must be delivered in phases, plan entire alignment holistically with communities.
- Extended project timelines may allow communities to build resiliency to prevent gentrification in the Casino Road area.
Eastside insights

• East Link opening is highly anticipated for expanding access between Eastside communities and Chinatown/International District.

• Hopelink working to connect Snoqualmie Valley and other surrounding communities to East Link stations, which will expand accessibility to many with enhanced mobility needs.
Seattle-area insights

- The Delridge corridor anticipates more than 200 additional affordable housing units. Station has many destinations, incl. Youngstown Cultural Arts Center, library, South Seattle Community College and multiple human services agencies.

- Graham Street is key hub for community services, cultural centers, housing projects, childcare, ethnic groceries and small businesses, incl. for Filipino, Somali, Cham and other international communities. Graham St. Action Coalition has community-driven plan and for the station area.
Seattle-area insights, cont.

• Chinatown/International District is cultural connection of the diaspora, and new station will be major destination. Community needs time to recover from the pandemic before more construction impacts and to ensure Jackson Hub is driven by community priorities and vision.

• Pioneer Square has been under high pressure construction since 2008, delays make pressure feel endless.

• WSBLE will reduce buses on Alaskan Way, realizing the full potential of the waterfront revitalization.
South King County insights

• Perception that transit is Seattle-centric there is a desire to prioritize South Sound destinations for communities of color, those living with disabilities and elderly groups.

• Many communities don’t currently use ST services.

• Now could be a time to rethink the system plan and give faster service to communities in South King.

• Parking should be free in Federal Way.
Pierce County insights

- Feeling of being last served despite pressing need; more access and housing for youth and aging population needed.
- Hilltop-Tacoma Community College connection is a top priority for people pushed out of Hilltop in search of more affordable living.
- 650 units of affordable housing planned at end of Hilltop-TCC line; 200 units of multi-family housing near the Tacoma Dome. These are catalysts for redevelopment and affordable housing projects that will improve access.
Public engagement
April public engagement

Online open house and survey
• Outlined realignment issues and captured non-scientific input.
• Available in English, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

Additional comment options
• Email realignment@soundtransit.org
• Dedicated voicemail inbox
• Board meeting public comment
• Stakeholder briefing comment
Promoting broad participation

- Progress report mailer to all 1.3M ST district households.
- Digital ads in multiple languages.
- Emails ST’s ~100K subscribers.
- Website, social media, news media.
- Community engagement (projects, jurisdictions, organizations).
- Text pilot reaching 10,000 non-English speaking, low-income and disabled residents.
## Overview of participation

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<th>Unique visitors to online open house</th>
<th>Surveys completed, with 6,717 open-ended responses</th>
<th>Emails from general public</th>
<th>Voicemails from general public</th>
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<td>9,730 Surveys completed, with 6,717 open-ended responses</td>
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<td>- 1,348 Tagalog</td>
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<td>- 1,026 Korean</td>
<td>- 1,374 Vietnamese</td>
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Survey results
Who responded to the online survey?

Equity focus in previously described stakeholder engagement particularly important, given over-representation of certain groups in survey results:

- 24% identified as a person of color
- 84% identified as white (question allowed multiple identifications)
- 63% reported a household income of $100K or more
- 49% live in Seattle area
Input solicited through the survey

Project priorities

- Participants ranked voter-approved projects that are not yet in construction in any corridor of interest.

Open-ended question

"Why are the transit projects you've prioritized important to you? What would you prioritize when considering delaying, phasing, or modifying future transit projects?"

- Non-scientific input from self-selected participants.
**Consistent themes across subareas**

- Expanding Link light rail is the highest priority.
- Perception that cost estimates should have been planned for more effectively.
- Concern that costs, particularly property costs, will only increase the longer we wait.
- Support for parking is divided.
Pierce residents' South Corridor priorities

Highest Priority
- Tacoma Dome Link Extension
- Sounder South Capacity Expansion
- TCC/Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension
- Sumner Station Parking and Access Improvements
- DuPont Sounder Extension
- South Tacoma Station Access Improvements
- SR 162
- Lakewood Station Access Improvements
- Auburn Station Parking and Access Improvements
- S Boeing Access Rd Infill Station
- Stride 1-405 BRT South
- Kent Station Parking and Access Improvements

Lowest Priority

Responses:
- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th
S. King residents' South Corridor priorities

Highest Priority
- Tacoma Dome Link Extension
- Sounder South Capacity Expansion
- Kent Station Parking and Access Improvements
- S Boeing Access Rd Infill Station
- Auburn Station Parking and Access Improvements
- Stride 1-405 BRT South
- TCC/Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension
- DuPont Sounder Extension
- Sumner Station Parking and Access Improvements
- SR 162
- South Tacoma Station Access Improvements
- Lakewood Station Access Improvements

Lowest Priority
N. King residents' Central Corridor priorities

Responses

Highest Priority
West Seattle Link Extension
Ballard Link Extension
Downtown tunnel
RapidRide C & D
NE 130th St. Infill Station
S Graham St. Infill Station
Stride SR 522

Lowest Priority

0 500 1000 1500 2000 2500 3000 3500 4000

1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th
East King residents' East Corridor priorities

Highest Priority

South Kirkland-Issaquah Link

Stride I-405 North

Stride SR 522

Stride I-405 South

North Sammamish Park-and-Ride

Lowest Priority

Responses

1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th
Snohomish residents' N. Corridor priorities

**Highest Priority**

Everett Link Extension

Stride 1-405 BRT North

Edmonds and Mukilteo Stations Parking and Access Improvements

**Lowest Priority**

Responses

Colors: 1st (Orange), 2nd (Green), 3rd (Blue)
Reasons why people prioritized projects

- Transit is personal:
  - How changes will impact me personally
  - I’d use the service to reach work, entertainment, friends and family, school or medical services

- Current transit options in my community are insufficient.

- We’ve already waited and contributed financially.

- Traffic congestion only getting worse, especially with population growth.

- Focus on projects with the greatest ridership potential.

- Prioritize transit-dependent and historically underrepresented communities.
Thank you.