



## Federal Way Link Extension



September and October 2015

**Kent/Des Moines Station**

**Stakeholder Workshop Summary**

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# Summary

## Background

On July 23, 2015, the Sound Transit Board identified an I-5 Alternative as the preferred alternative for the Federal Way Link Extension. The Board also directed staff, in coordination with key stakeholders, to further evaluate potential modifications to the preferred Kent/Des Moines Station that would optimize the location of the station between Highline College and 30th Ave South to: 1) facilitate access to Highline College and 2) enhance future transit-oriented development in the Midway area.

## Process

In response to the Board's direction, Sound Transit staff hosted four stakeholder workshops. The workshops were held at Highline College in the City of Des Moines. Participants were charged with finding consensus on recommendations to provide to the Sound Transit Board.

- **Workshop #1:** September 15, 2015, 2-5pm
- **Workshop #2:** September 22, 2015, 2-5pm
- **Workshop #3:** September 29, 2015, 2-4pm
- **Workshop #4:** October 13, 2015, 2-5pm



## Participants

The workshops included representatives of the following entities: City of Des Moines, City of Kent, FutureWise, Highline College, Highline College Students, King County Executive Office, King County Metro, OneAmerica, Puget Sound Regional Council, Sound Transit, Transportation Choices Coalition, Urban Land Institute, and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).



## Workshops

### Workshop #1

Stakeholders received presentations on the Highline College Master Plan, the Midway Subarea Plan, and Sound Transit's station concepts. Participants then formed into three breakout groups and were asked to identify three goals for the station area and three ideas to accomplish those goals. The following emerged as key themes for subsequent workshops:

- Optimizing access for all modes of transport
- Creating a safe pedestrian environment
- Creating development opportunities (near term and long term)

### Workshop #2

Highline students expressed their position and concerns. Key themes from the first workshop were then reviewed and Sound Transit responded to information requests. Participants formed into breakout groups and were asked to 1) identify catalyst Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) parcels, 2) propose locations for the bus transit center, paratransit and parking facilities and 3) suggest specific ideas to activate the S 236th Lane connection to campus. Concepts were proposed for stations on the west side of SR 99 and the west side of 30th Ave S.

### Workshop #3

Sound Transit responded to additional information requests. Technical staff then summarized the issues raised in the previous two workshops and identified potential solutions that could be evaluated. Additional feedback on issues and solutions was sought from the group. Sound Transit then committed to advancing concepts for both an SR 99 West station location and 30th Ave West station location for stakeholder review at the fourth workshop.

### Workshop #4

Sound Transit presented concepts for both an SR 99 West station location and 30th Ave West station location. Technical staff outlined the advantages and disadvantages of each concept in terms of access, safety, and transit-oriented development potential. At various points during the workshop, participants were requested to provide their observations. The workshop concluded with a discussion of recommendations to provide to the Sound Transit Board.

## Recommendations

The stakeholder group acknowledged the advantages of a 30th Ave West station location in terms of multimodal access, minimizing traffic congestion, transit-oriented development potential, and the commitment of the cities to the implementation of a transit-oriented community in the Midway area. In doing so, the group acknowledged that significant compromise was made by supporters of an SR 99 West station location. The group requested that Sound Transit, in partnership with key stakeholders, commit resources to implementing the following recommendations in association with a 30th Ave West station location:

- Provide a connection from the station to Highline College along the future S 236th Lane. The group envisioned a boulevard that would include pedestrian walkways, lighting, landscaping, weather protection and other treatments.
- Implement treatments at the future S 236th Lane crossing of SR 99 to enhance pedestrian safety and convenience.
- Facilitate transit-oriented development along S 236th Lane in the near term to help activate the connection between the station and Highline College and enhance safety and security.
- Maintain existing King County Metro bus stops on the south side of campus.
- Improve pedestrian access from adjacent neighborhoods to the station area.
- Facilitate housing development in the Midway area that can accommodate a mix of incomes.
- Consider naming the station "Highline Station" or "Highline College Station". The group recognized that adoption of a station name would be a Board decision and subject to broader public input during final design.
- Continue to engage Highline students and other stakeholders in ongoing planning efforts.



S 236th Lane looking east  
(30th Ave West Station)

# Workshop #1

## Meeting Details

Date	Time	Location
September 15, 2015	2 – 5 p.m.	Highline College, Building 29, Room 216 2400 S. 240th St. Des Moines, WA 98198

## Attendees

### City of Des Moines

Grant Fredricks

### City of Kent

Ben Wolters, Charlene Anderson

### FutureWise

Bryce Yadon

### Highline College

Lisa Skari, Michael Pham, James Peyton

### Highline College Students

Pa Ousman Jobe, Abdul Aziz Bah, Ruth Krizan, Jake Boudreaux

### King County Executive's Office

Chris Arkills

### King County Metro

Sally Turner, Doug Johnson

### One America

Carly Brook

### Puget Sound Regional Council

Michael Hubner

### Transportation Choices Coalition

Shefali Ranganathan, Andrew Austin

### Urban Land Institute

Dan Eernisse

### WSDOT

Carol Hunter

### Sound Transit Board

Dave Upthegrove

### Sound Transit Staff

Ric Ilgenfritz, Cathal Ridge, Sandra Fann, Don Billen, Ann McNeil, Jon Mihkels, Tralayne Myers

### Consulting Team

Jeanne Krikawa, Underhill; Donn Hogan, HDR; Clarence Wong, HDR; Hannah Lake, HDR; Daryl Schneider, HDR; Michael George, Kidder Mathews; Brett Houghton, PRR; Carryn Vande Griend, PRR

## Workshop #1 Summary

### Presentations

- Welcome, Introductions & Charge (Dave Upthegrove)
- Scope & Stakeholder Group Input (Ric Ilgenfritz, Sound Transit)
- Highline College Master Plan (Michael Pham, Vice President, Administrative Services, Highline College)
- Envision Midway & Midway Subarea Plan (Ben Wolters, City of Kent)
- Kent/Des Moines Station Concepts (Cathal Ridge, Sound Transit)

### Breakout Groups

#### Define Goals/Capture Ideas

- Question 1 – What are your top 3 goals for the station area as a group?
- Question 2 – What are your top 3 ideas to reach your goal?
- Design Exercise

### Report Out

#### Group 1 (Andrew Austin, Jake Boudreaux, Ruth Krizan, Dan Eernisse, Sally Turner, Donn Hogan, Jeanne Krikawa)

- **Goal 1:** Pedestrian safety and access to the station and Highline College
  - » **Idea:** Improve SR 99 between S. 240th Street and Kent-Des Moines Road on a pedestrian scale with a strong 236th Lane crossing
- **Goal 2:** Create an active 24/7 business and residential district to provide a safe environment for students and transit riders
  - » **Idea:** Create and improve a grid system following design guidelines
- **Goal 3:** Well-connected bus transit especially in the east-west direction and to the south
  - » **Idea:** Maintain and improve stops and routes in/around Highline College

**Group 2** (Pa Ousman Jobe, Lisa Skari, Shefali Ranganathan, Carol Hunter, Chris Arkills, Bryce Yadon, Charlene Anderson, Doug Johnson, Clarence Wong, Tralayne Myers, Hannah Lake)

- **Goal 1:** High-quality multi modal access
  - » **Idea:** Want good quality options for people to get to the station – provide accessibility for pedestrians, bike, bus, and car.
  - » **Idea:** Prioritize bus access as it is the largest way the station will be served. King County Metro buses should have a good way to circulate in the station area and locate the bus facility next to the Link station. Consider locating the bus transit center under the light rail station.
- **Goal 2:** Maximize TOD opportunities in the area
  - » **Idea:** SR 99 East station option (fronting SR 99) doesn't provide access between Highline College and light rail without crossing SR 99 and eliminates high value TOD frontage. Focus on what is the trigger, what can help be a catalyst for TOD. Is there some opportunity to relocate the library or minimize impacts around the station?
- **Goal 3:** Safety and security in the station area
  - » **Idea:** Activate the public spaces along the route to the station so people are there during transit operations even as people move away from the college area. Promote businesses moving in and people living there.

**Group 3** (James Peyton, Abdul Aziz Bah, Jon Mikhels, Grant Fredricks, Michael George, Carly Brook, Michael Hubner, Daryl Schneider)

- **Goal 1:** Safe access from the station to Highline College
  - » **Idea:** Focus on 236th Lane development and creating a corridor for students.
  - » **Idea:** Potential design piece - pedestrian and bicycle bridge over SR 99.
- **Goal 2:** Convenient access for students and the surrounding community
  - » **Idea:** Maintain bus access to Highline College. Even though the center of gravity will move east, direct bus access to the campus is needed.
- **Goal 3:** Maintain tax base/TOD – frontage visibility from a developer perspective
  - » **Idea:** Public private partnership that can promote development and safety.
    - There is an active project with Highline Place (mixed use, student housing, public-private project). If station is west of SR 99 this development, as currently defined, will not happen.
  - » **Idea:** Promote long term and short term development. How do we get results in the short term by using these smaller parcels and configuring station development?
    - Develop 236th Lane as a short term solution.
    - SR 99 East station option (fronting SR 99) doesn't really help TOD development in the short-term or promote the natural flow of people along SR 99.



## Closing Discussion

### ***What about a median station option?***

- Median station option was evaluated in the DEIS. Sound Transit will provide information.

### ***Would RapidRide stay on SR 99?***

- Yes, but the stop would be relocated near S 236th Lane to provide better access to Highline College and the station.

### ***Can you show us cost differences of each station alternative and the costs of the infrastructure upgrades on local governments?***

- Yes. Sound Transit will provide information.

### ***Need more information on walking estimates, e.g. how topography gets incorporated. Consider other walk paths, not just from Highline College.***

- Sound Transit will provide profile and walk times.

### ***Did other breakout groups have station preferences?***

- All groups liked the SR 99 East Station (fronting SR 99) least.

### ***Need more information about pedestrian walk times for elevated or at grade crossings, specifically the time it takes to cross using both options.***

- Sound Transit will provide information.

### ***Are there additional properties that are impacted depending on which station is chosen?***

- Yes. Sound Transit will provide information.

### ***What are ideas to make an at-grade crossing attractive to pedestrians?***

- Sound Transit will show some examples.

### ***What could we do in the short term to improve access and safety?***

- Sound Transit will present potential pedestrian safety enhancements.

## Action items

- Send additional information requests to Sound Transit
- Sound Transit will distribute meeting exhibits to the group
- Next week's meeting agenda will include responses to the above information requests and will follow-up on ideas raised at today's meeting.

## Next Meeting - September 22, 2:00-5:00 pm, Highline College, Building 2



# Workshop #2

## Meeting Details

Date	Time	Location
September 22, 2015	2 – 5 p.m.	Highline College, Building 2 2400 S. 240th St. Des Moines, WA 98198

## Attendees

### City of Des Moines

Brandon Carver, Grant Fredricks

### City of Kent

Ben Wolters, Charlene Anderson, Hayley Bonsteel

### Highline College

Lisa Skari, James Peyton

### Highline College Students

Pa Ousman Jobe, Abdul Aziz Bah, Ruth Krizan, Jake Boudreaux

### King County Executive's Office

Chris Arkills

### King County Metro

Doug Johnson, Paul Eng, Sally Turner

### One America

Carly Brook, Patience Malaba

### Transportation Choices Coalition

Andrew Austin, Hester Serebrin

### Urban Land Institute

Jared Jonson

### WSDOT

Rob Brown

### Sound Transit staff

Don Billen, Sandra Fann, Tralayne Myers, Jon Mihkels,  
Trinity Parker, Cathal Ridge

### Consulting Team

Jeanne Krikawa, Underhill; Donn Hogan, HDR; Clarence Wong,  
HDR; Hannah Lake, HDR; Daryl Schneider, HDR; Michael George,  
Kidder Mathews; Brett Houghton, PRR; Robert Reyes, PRR, Craig  
Grandstrom, CH2M, Joshua Johnson, CH2M

## Workshop #2 Summary

### Presentations

- Welcome and Introductions (Cathal Ridge)
- Student position and concerns (Pa Ousman Jobe, Student Body President)
- Responses to requests for information from September 15 workshop (Cathal Ridge)

### Breakout Groups

#### Define Goals/Capture Ideas

For both the SR 99 West and 30th Ave West station options:

- Identify catalyst TOD parcels
- Propose locations for the bus transit center, paratransit drop off loop, permanent parking garage and temporary surface parking lot(s)
- Suggest specific ideas to activate S 236th Lane connection to campus





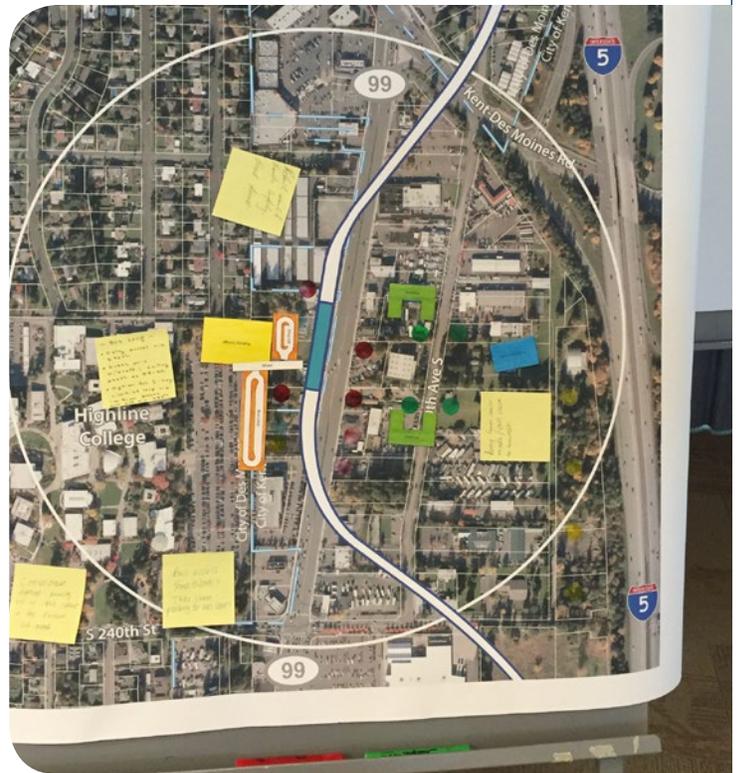
**Group 2 (Stage Right)** (Pa Ousman Jobe, Lisa Skari, Rob Brown, Joshua Johnson, Chris Arkills, Charlene Anderson, Doug Johnson, Clarence Wong, Tralayne Myers, Hannah Lake, Jake Boudreaux)

### SR 99 West Station

- The group did not want to have residential buildings right against the light rail or I-5. Employment and offices should be located further away from the train and close to I-5. The center area, between 30th Ave and SR 99, should be the residential area.
- Retail could be located along the east side of SR 99.
- By 236th Lane, on the Highline College side, there could be an enhanced plaza which would encourage retail development. Greater use of this area would make it safer.
- Next to SR 99, the group suggested creating a mixed use development with offices. With regard to the proposed Highline Place development, the group suggested locating that development somewhere else so that area could be used for parking and paratransit drop-off. The group suggested consolidating parking by using existing lots or collaborating with other institutions in the area who already provide parking. The group suggested a parking garage that is jointly owned and used by Sound Transit and Highline College.

### 30th Ave West Station

- Improved pedestrian gateway along 236th Lane is a priority, especially since students are walking farther.
- The catalyst parcels would be along 236th Lane.
- The group suggested adding different pedestrian treatments with the longer walk distances.
  - » Could the speed along SR 99 be reduced?
  - » Better pedestrian crossings?
  - » Could SR 99 be narrower here?
  - » Pedestrian signal is desirable.
- While it would be very expensive, the group asked Sound Transit to review the layout to see if there could be a mezzanine at this station and connect to the station with an elevated pedestrian walkway across SR 99.
- Buses could be routed under the guideway. This would get buses in and out faster. The buses could utilize the street grid, both clockwise and counter clockwise.
- The group suggested only one parking garage—located on the east side so it is more focused on the station. The group talked about how the parking would relate with the parking needs of surrounding buildings. The station parking could possibly be located at the base of an office building.



**Group 2: SR 99 West Station Notes**

- The group started to work on potential TOD locations, with concentrated housing on the east side of 30th Ave.

### Closing Discussion – Questions from the Group

- Could parking be shared with Highline College? Could it be located between the station and Highline College? Who would share the cost?
- With the 30th Ave West Station there were a lot of suggestions for retail development. What guarantee is there that it would happen?
- What are the requirements for interim parking? And how long would the interim parking be in place?
- Suggestion to change the station name to Highline Station instead of Kent/Des Moines Station

### Action items

- Recommendation for King County Metro to pick a “best” layout for Metro services for each station location, enabling the workshop to focus on other details around the station.

**Next Meeting – Tuesday, September 28,  
2 pm – 5 pm; Highline College Building 2**

# Workshop #3

## Meeting Details

Date	Time	Location
September 29, 2015	2 – 4 p.m.	Highline College, Building 2 2400 S. 240th St. Des Moines, WA 98198

## Attendees

### WSDOT

Carol Hunter

### Highline College

Lisa Skari, James Peyton

### Highline College Students

Pa Ousman Jobe, Abdul Aziz Bah, Ruth Krizan, Jake Boudreaux

### City of Kent

Ben Wolters, Charlene Anderson, Hayley Bonsteel

### City of Des Moines

Brandon Carver, Grant Fredricks

### King County Executive's Office

Chris Arkills

### King County Metro

Paul Eng, Sally Turner

### One America

Carly Brook

### Transportation Choices Coalition

Hester Serebrin

### Urban Land Institute

John Hempelmann

### Sound Transit staff

Don Billen, Sandra Fann, Tralayne Myers, Jon Mihkels,  
Trinity Parker, Cathal Ridge

### Consulting Team

Craig Grandstrom, CH2M; Josh Johnson, CH2M; Donn Hogan,  
HDR; Daryl Schneider, HDR; Clarence Wong, HDR; Michael George,  
Kidder Mathews; Brett Houghton, PRR; Robert Reyes, PRR; Jeanne  
Krikawa, Underhill

## Workshop #3 Summary

### Presentations

- Welcome and Introductions (Cathal Ridge)
- Purpose of Stakeholder Workshops (Don Billen) Recapped the purpose of the stakeholder workshops.
- Response to Information Requests from Workshop #2 (Cathal Ridge)

Reviewed meeting agenda and addressed information requests from previous meeting including:

### *Explain what is meant by interim parking and what does that mean for TOD?*

- **Answer:** Currently, Sound Transit is funded to construct to the Kent/Des Moines (Highline College) area. For some period, this may be the terminus station. While this is the terminus station, temporary parking lots will be necessary to accommodate riders. When the alignment extends past this station those temporary lots could be surplus and converted to other uses.

### *What is the program requirement for temporary parking?*

- **Response:** Parking capacity is based on demand projections, taking into account the number of boardings and who would be driving and parking at the station. There is no fixed number; projections determine the parking program requirements.

### *What about an at-grade station at Highline College?*

- **Response:** An at-grade station on the west side of SR 99 is not feasible. It would not be practical to cross SR 99 and Kent-Des Moines Road at-grade. And it is not feasible to have an elevated alignment over SR 99 and Kent-Des Moines Road and then transition to an at-grade station in the vicinity of S 236th Lane.

**What about shared parking in the Highline College parking lot?**

- **Response:** Sound Transit presented a potential configuration for a shared parking structure on Highline College’s east parking lot. The structure would be 3 to 4 stories high and would accommodate displaced student parking as well as station parking. Given that demand for student and station parking would be concurrent, the concept represents a consolidation of parking capacity and would not reduce the overall parking supply in the area. In addition, some form of parking management would be required.

**While the Kent/Des Moines Station is the terminus, would there be truncation of routes at the station?**

- **Response:** The 574 would be truncated here. Several other routes (121, 122, 156) already terminate on campus and would have an extra stop at the station.

**Would it be possible to implement transportation demand management in the area?**

- **Response:** The project is currently in the environmental stage of project development and a key objective is to assess demand and identify appropriate sizing of facilities. As the project moves into operation, strategies to encourage alternate modes of access would be pursued.

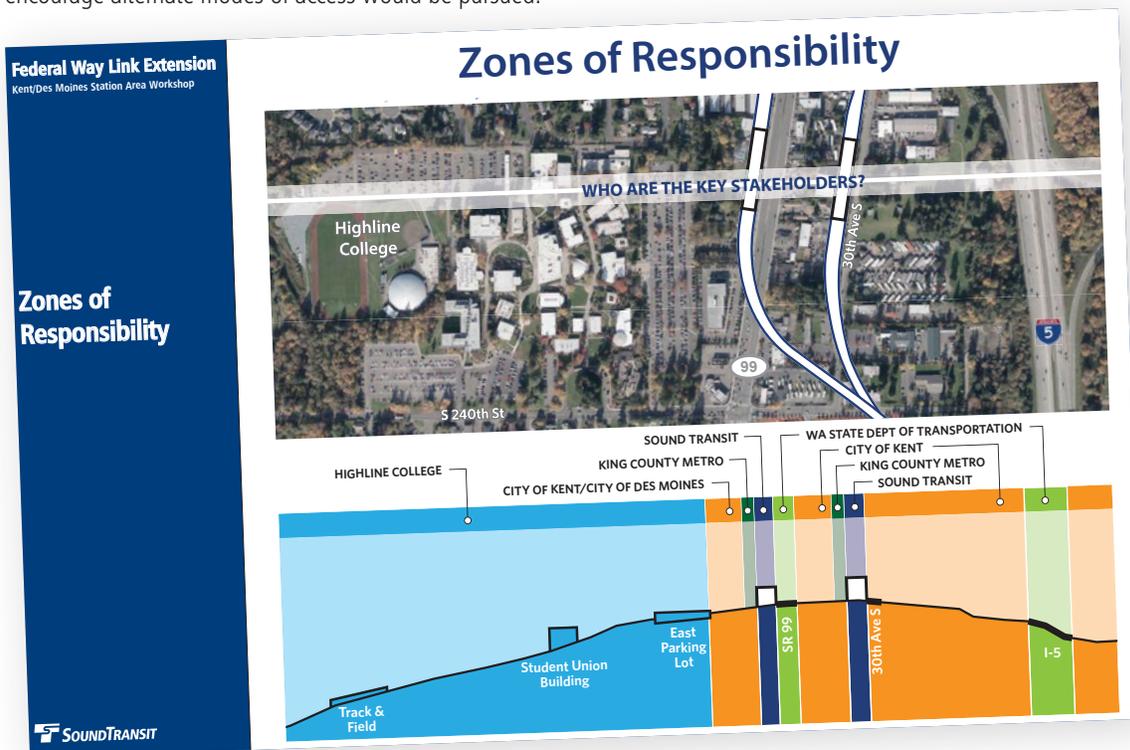
**Issues and Potential Solutions**

Sound Transit staff compiled and organized the issues that were raised in the previous workshops. The issues were categorized into three areas:

- Optimizing access for all modes of transportation
- Creating a safe pedestrian environment
- Creating development opportunities (near term and long term)

The group was queried as to whether this matched their understanding and if there were any areas that Sound Transit missed. There were no corrections or additions.

Zones of responsibility in the station area were described. The various stakeholders including Highline College, the cities, WSDOT, King County Metro and Sound Transit would need to collaborate and coordinate their planning efforts to make the station and the surrounding area successful.



## Presentations on key issues

### Optimizing access for all modes

- Sally Turner, King County Metro, presented concepts on how bus access could be best configured for the two station concepts.
- Josh Johnson, CH2M, presented information on vehicle and pedestrian access issues and potential solutions.

### Creating a safe pedestrian environment

- Jeanne Krikawa, Underhill, described issues and potential solutions for enhancing overall safety in the station area and from the station to the campus. Potential solutions include use of lighting, creating a boulevard along S 236th Lane, covered areas for weather protection, activating the connection through treatments such as landscaping and street furniture. Potential concepts for enhancing the gateway to Highline College were also presented.

### Creating development opportunities

- Michael George, Kidder-Mathews, presented information on the stages of development and investment. Short term, short to mid-term, mid to long-term, and long-term development possibilities were discussed.

## Additional questions, concerns and comments

- It is important to sustain existing viable commercial activities, including the mini-storage on SR 99. Another important consideration is to preserve the existing multi-story mixed use office building on SR 99. It would be demolished to make way for some of the station options. The existing multi-story office building helps create a positive environment that could encourage other multi-story office and mixed use development. (Grant Fredricks)
- Can the ideas for improving the pedestrian experience be paid for with the existing funding? (Hester Serebrin)
  - » **Response:** Sound Transit has budget limitations and, based on estimates to date, the current concepts exceed the project budget. Therefore, some project improvements would likely be funded by the project but some would need to be a collaboration that includes other stakeholders.
- Has a survey of the community been conducted to see what sort of development they are looking for? Are they interested in multi-story mixed-use buildings in this area? Maybe there is an opportunity for building a different market. (Hester Serebrin)
  - » **Response:** There has been a lot of stakeholder outreach over the years through the various planning

efforts including the work to develop the Midway Subarea Plan, various ULI forums, etc.

- Ultimately regardless of the land use planning that is conducted, the real estate market decides what is going to happen. (Grant Fredricks)
  - » **Response:** The stakeholders do not control the market, but can influence where the guideway and station are located. The objective of the current effort is to optimally locate the guideway and station facilities so as not to impede potential future development. Certain configurations can make development more likely to occur including minimizing impacts to parcels, developing the street grid and creating street frontage.
- Most of the focus to this point has been a north-south alignment for various station elements. Would we consider a more east-west configuration? Does the station location keep us from doing something on the other side of SR 99? (Lisa Skari)
  - » **Response:** Yes, looking at east-west station elements is appropriate including options that locate facilities on both sides of SR 99 along S 236th Lane. It makes sense to distribute these items so as to distribute traffic in the station area.
- There has been a lot of discussion of landscape treatments and activating space. What sort of security would be in place for people walking on the pathway between the campus and station when it is dark? Could there be permanent safety measures in place? Would security personnel, police or Sound Transit staff be part of the plan? (Pa Ousman Jobe)
  - » **Response:** The station itself will be secured by Sound Transit. However, regardless of whether the station is located on the east or west side of SR 99, much of the walk from campus will be through the campus itself including the east parking lot. Therefore, enhancing the security of the walk from campus to the station will require enhancing the walkway, lighting, etc. across the campus and engaging security personnel once the system is in operation.
- The real estate markets are starting to respond very dramatically in positive economic ways to the movement in America to have more walkable communities. There are many studies that show higher rents and higher sale prices in walkable and transit-rich areas. Dynamics are changing over the past few years. You have to think in 5-10-15 year timeframes. What has been seen around the country is that the stations that are successful and safe have multiple uses and tend to operate 24 hours a day. Stand-alone

stations are not as successful and not as safe. The more eyes there are in the area, the more safe it is. The more types of activities that are happening, the better. (John Hempelmann)

- From a traffic engineering perspective, one would question whether speed limit reductions on SR 99 are practical; this would require coordination with WSDOT and others to implement. However, ideas such as renaming the station or the new street could be pursued. S 236th Lane could be renamed Highline Lane / Boulevard or something similar to emphasize that the street is the gateway to Highline College. (Brandon Carver)
- The development areas next to I-5 or next to SR 99 seem unpalatable. What would a developable parcel look like in this area? How close would development likely go toward I-5? What sort of land use would end up close to or on SR 99? What is development likely to look like? Do we want the guideway placed farther away from what is good for TOD? How do the guideway and station affect the sense of place and space? (James Peyton)
  - » **Responses:** Developers are looking for different things. Different uses are seeking different property sizes. For some uses, having visibility to the freeway is desirable. A hotel, for example, might want visibility from the freeway. Retail may also want freeway visibility,

especially in auto-oriented areas. It is not just about what roadway you are up against, but what you can see. For residential, views might be a consideration. Transit itself is seen as an amenity. At the same time it is just one amenity. Developers might also look for a park. Developers look for all the things we look for as individuals when we are looking for housing. For office space, one might want places for office workers to eat lunch and run errands nearby. Sometimes office uses like to cluster. There are a whole host of things developers are looking for depending on their niches and what they are seeking to develop.

### Next Steps - Announcement of 4th meeting on October 13 at 2pm

Sound Transit will advance the concepts for both the SR 99 West and 30th Ave West stations and attempt to incorporate solutions to address the issues shared through the workshops. The concepts will be presented at the next workshop and the group will engage in an effort to gain consensus on recommendations to be brought to the Sound Transit Board. Sound Transit staff remains available to conduct field visits and to answer questions at any time.

### Next Meeting – Tuesday, October 13, 2 pm – 5 pm; Highline College Building 2



# Workshop #4

## Meeting Details

Date	Time	Location
October 13, 2015	2 – 5 p.m.	Highline College, Building 2 2400 S. 240th St. Des Moines, WA 98198

## Attendees

### WSDOT

Carol Hunter

### Highline College

Lisa Skari, James Peyton

### Highline College Students

Pa Ousman Jobe, Abdul Aziz Bah, Ruth Krizan, Jake Boudreaux

### City of Kent

Ben Wolters, Charlene Anderson, Hayley Bonsteel

### City of Des Moines

Brandon Carver, Grant Fredricks

### King County Executive's Office

Chris Arkills

### King County Metro

Paul Eng, Sally Turner; Doug Johnson

### One America

Carly Brook

### Transportation Choices Coalition

Shefali Ranganathan

### Urban Land Institute

John Hempelmann, Dave Cutler

### Sound Transit staff

Don Billen, Sandra Fann, Traylane Myers, Jon Mihkels,  
Trinity Parker, Cathal Ridge; Sloan Dawson

### Consulting Team

Josh Johnson, CH2M; Donn Hogan, HDR; Daryl Schneider, HDR;  
Clarence Wong, HDR; Michael George, Kidder Mathews; Carryn  
Vande Griend, PRR; Robert Reyes, PRR; Jeanne Krikawa, Underhill;  
Hannah Lake, HDR; Marcia Wagoner, 3SquareBlocks; Craig  
Grandstrom, CH2M



## Workshop #4 Summary

### Presentations

- Welcome and Introductions (Cathal Ridge)
- Goals and Format (Don Billen, Marcia Wagoner)
- Station Concepts (Cathal Ridge)

### Planning priority: Access

**Walk/Bike:** Jeanne Krikawa, Underhill, explained how each station concept would be accessed by different groups of riders on foot: students, transit users, park and riders, the surrounding community and the projected added population of the Midway subarea development (9,500 new jobs and 12,000 households). The SR 99 West station concept would provide better access for students. The 30th Avenue West station concept would be more easily accessible by bus, car, and pedestrians from a wider community.

**Bus:** Sally Turner, King County Metro, discussed how buses and other forms of transit would access the station. She emphasized the importance of building the station with enough space to accommodate changing technology and bus size, while allowing room for cars and pedestrians. Considering the need to minimize conflicts with cars and pedestrians, maintain connection proximity for transit users, adapt changing bus service and equipment, and maintain operational efficiency, the 30th Avenue West station concept would serve transit users the best.

**Auto:** Josh Johnson, CH2M, showed the group how cars would access each station concept, where traffic flows would come from and where there would be pinch points causing backups. The SR 99 West station concept has two access points and significant potential for backups on SR 99, Highline College and Sound Transit parking facilities. The 30th Ave West station option will still experience congestion during peak periods, but because there would be five separate access points, traffic will flow more efficiently through and around the station site. Josh concluded that the 30th Ave West station option would allow traffic to circulate more efficiently.



## Questions

**To what extent will the 240th Street transit hub be affected by these options?**

- **Response:** King County Metro buses will still use the 240th Street on-street stop and continue on to the new transit facility near the station. If Highline College prefers, both station concepts could retain the 240th Street stop on campus.

**Is there going to be any sort of active parking management?**

- **Response:** Sound Transit will eventually consolidate parking into one structure, as the alignment continues south. They have the ability to phase in a capacity real time tracking system or other parking management strategies.

**What are the proposed pedestrian and bicycle improvements along SR 99?**

- **Response:** The Highline College and Midway Subarea plans include pedestrian and bike improvements. These plans and other access improvements identified through Sound Transit's station planning process will require coordination between the cities, Sound Transit and Highline College.

**Will the budget include sidewalk and pedestrian improvements?**

- **Response:** At the moment, the stakeholders are focused on developing a joint vision for the station. Moving forward, there will need to be negotiations about who implements and pays for improvements.



**SR 99 West station location**

## Stakeholder Observations

- The 30th Avenue West station option would provide more access and space for transit connections, result in fewer choke points and provide more flexibility for all users.
- Pedestrians crossing SR 99 remains a top concern for all stakeholders, especially students at Highline College who are familiar with the current crosswalks at S 240th Street. Pedestrians are at the greatest risk from a safety perspective.
- Access for the surrounding communities, especially low income households that will rely on the station for transportation, should be factored into station planning.
- Regardless of the station chosen by the Sound Transit Board, S 236th Lane will need to include a safe, at-grade pedestrian crossing at Highline College's new entrance.
- Stakeholders are concerned that the SR 99 West station concept would result in high levels of auto congestion.
- SR 99 was designed for use by cars. With future increases in population, these needs are changing. We have the opportunity to integrate more multimodal access and connections for future use.

## Planning priority: Safety and the Public Realm

**Station to Campus:** Jon Mihkels, Sound Transit, noted that while the facility itself will be constructed by Sound Transit, design strategies should be incorporated to maximize safety for users. The focus needs to be on people approaching the system; future residences, business and students. All stakeholders emphasized a need for a safe pedestrian experience regardless of station location. This responsibility will rest on multiple stakeholders to provide elements that will contribute to safety. Regardless of station location, safety improvement will require increased lighting, more eyes on the street, perceived presence, and ownership of the space. All of these items together will provide a safe environment for members of the community.

**Along SR 99:** Donn Hogan, HDR, emphasized the need to design a structure for the future (a 50 to 100-year facility). What is decided on now has a dramatic impact on future development and growth for the area. The development of S 236th Lane creates a strong east-west spine for station access and TOD potential. Placing the station west of 30th Avenue allows for a wider area to access the station and all future elements to be built (parking, bus turnaround). The TOD potential and flexibility of the 30th Ave West station option also greatly increases the safety for the area and livability. The architects struggled through designing the same elements for the SR 99 West station option, due to space constraints. Taking into consideration the multiple stakeholders' plans and proposal of Highline Place, the 30th Ave location allows for safety concerns to be addressed, while maximizing TOD potential and flexibility for Highline College's future growth.



30th Ave West station location

## Questions

***Did you look at this in terms of unifying street concepts? How do you strengthen that visual connection and how would you deal with questions regarding safety and experience that have come up so far?***

- **Response:** Although the Sound Transit team is specifically tasked with developing the station facility, as architects and planners the team does consider integration with other elements and understanding how the project fits within the bigger picture.

***For the 30th Ave West station concept, how would people in the neighborhood north of Highline College access the station?***

- **Response:** Currently this neighborhood, like many, has a car-oriented design and is effectively a cul-de-sac. However, opportunities to develop pedestrian pathways could be explored. This effort requires collaboration, over time, with the City and the neighborhoods in question.

***What has Sound Transit learned when siting light rail stations next to a campus in the past? There are many instances where they have done so in the past, Seattle Central, UW and the Northgate station by North Seattle Community College. What are the lessons learned?***

- **Response:** We've already learned that the stations need to be close enough to provide access but not too close to unduly impact the institution. Pedestrian access is important in all instances and has to be balanced with access for other modes. Another lesson learned is to bring stakeholders in early. It takes out of the box thinking and flexibility from all parties to solve issues that arise and help limit the modal conflicts.

## Stakeholder Observations

- With regard to the question of how much of the suggested improvements fall under Sound Transit's responsibility, it falls on the cities to get creative about developing the east side of SR 99 to make it a safe environment. As mentioned by Sound Transit, it is important to come out of this meeting with a vision and direction; implementation of that vision would ultimately require collaboration between all stakeholders.
- This is a rare opportunity to build a new community around the campus.
- The general concern is about safety, crossing the road, the human safety of the area. It is a dangerous area, currently, with a variety of crimes.
- We are planning for the future, long term, and providing an opportunity for Highline College to grow towards SR 99. A station on the west side of SR 99 constrains potential growth of Highline College.
- No matter what station location is chosen, S 236th Lane needs to be created and activated.
- Need to include an emphasis on bicycle traffic, as many individuals use this mode.
- Activate the space around the station.
- King County Metro doesn't see any reason they could not continue to service Highline College's current bus loop off S 240th Street.



## Planning priority: Transit Oriented Development

**Optimizing for TOD:** Michael George, Kidder Mathews, showed the stakeholders the impact of each station on parcels with the most TOD potential. The 30th Ave West station concept does not impact the businesses on SR 99 as much as the SR 99 West station option. The 30th Ave West station option would also create two new east-west connections consistent with the Midway Subarea Plan and would create developable properties along those access streets. The SR 99 West station option does not connect the station, Highline College or the Midway Area. It would split Sound Transit's property south of the station. The 30th Ave West station option has greater potential for short term and long term TOD in the Midway subarea.

**Near Term Ideas:** Sloan Dawson, Sound Transit TOD, added that if Sound Transit chose to build the 30th Ave West station option, they would be able to open the parcels adjacent to S 236th Lane for development either when the station opened or, possibly, prior to opening. Eventually, when the alignment extends south of the Kent/Des Moines area, the surface parking on either side of S 236th Lane would also be available for mixed use development. This area could potentially host public facilities, affordable housing, healthcare center or educational facilities for Highline College. These TOD parcels surrounding the 30th Avenue West station option are attractive to developers in the short and long term. It also allows the area just east of Highline College to accommodate future growth.

### Questions

**How large are the parcel sizes (bordering S 236th Lane, east of SR 99)?**

- **Response:** The frontages as currently shown range from 120 ft to 265 ft (same size as the Highline Place development parcel on the west side of SR 99). These parcels could adjust in size in the future, based on proposed use (e.g. affordable housing and ground floor retail).

**In this last stage of getting to the concepts, how was the TOD potential for the west side of 99 station changed?**

- **Response:** As station planning evolved since the last workshop, access roads were added to the station footprint to provide congestion relief along S 236th Lane. The space required for the bus layover for the SR 99 West station option results in small pockets of space that are of negligible size, in TOD terms.

**Did Sound Transit consider putting the station on the east side of 30th?**

- **Response:** Yes. There were many configurations for the station evaluated in the Draft EIS. However, the Board directed staff to focus on station options in the area west of 30th Ave to Highline College.

**When would Sound Transit release the property early?**

- **Response:** Sound Transit is committed to creating a station configuration that would facilitate use of this space and which could activate the street. In the near term, that space would be used to accommodate construction staging. To activate the space early, Sound Transit would need to find a partner. If successful, it may be possible to release the property concurrent with station opening, or perhaps earlier when heavy civil work is completed.



## Stakeholder Observations

- The emphasis on creating TOD potential around the station is directly tied to the need for safety for students. Near term TOD and street activation will help address security issues in the area.
- Developers will find the area more attractive if it is walkable.
- The 30th Ave West station option would preserve both business (tax revenue) and residential units along the west side of SR 99. The farther the alignment swings west, the greater the impact to the City of Des Moines.
- This is an opportunity to redevelop the SR 99 corridor for pedestrian use and create community in an area marked by parking lots and warehouses.
- The stakeholders appreciate the work Sound Transit has done to put their priorities into visual depictions of each station.
- While it is exciting to think about future development in that area, current Midway residents (especially low income groups) will need to be protected. We must not price them out of their own neighborhood.



## Discussion and Conclusions

The stakeholder group acknowledged the advantages of a 30th Ave West station location in terms of multimodal access, minimizing traffic congestion, transit-oriented development potential, and the commitment of the cities to the implementation of a transit-oriented community in the Midway area. In doing so, the group acknowledged that significant compromise was made by supporters of an SR 99 West station location. The group requested that Sound Transit, in partnership with key stakeholders, commit resources to implementing the following recommendations in association with a 30th Ave West station location:

- Provide a connection from the station to Highline College along the future S 236th Lane. The group envisioned a boulevard that would include pedestrian walkways, lighting, landscaping, weather protection and other treatments.
  - Implement treatments at the future S 236th Lane crossing of SR 99 to enhance pedestrian safety and convenience.
  - Facilitate transit-oriented development along S 236th Lane in the near term to help activate the connection between the station and Highline College and enhance safety and security.
- Maintain existing King County Metro bus stops on the south side of campus.
  - Improve pedestrian access from adjacent neighborhoods to the station area.
  - Facilitate housing development in the Midway area that can accommodate a mix of incomes.
  - Consider naming the station “Highline Station” or “Highline College Station”. The group recognized that adoption of a station name would be a Board decision and subject to broader public input during final design.
  - Continue to engage Highline students and other stakeholders in ongoing planning efforts.

The group agreed that as long as these recommendations are kept to the forefront in the station planning process, the station design will ultimately benefit all stakeholders. The group also recognized the work Sound Transit had put into the stakeholder workshop process and thanked them for inviting them into the design process.



# List of Participants

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