



## **West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions**

Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting #2 – March 14, 2018

Meeting Summary

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### **Agenda Item #1 – Welcome and introductions**

Diane Adams, Facilitator, welcomed the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) members to the group's second meeting. She reviewed the materials added to SAG members' binders since the first meeting.

SAG members in attendance were:

- Andres Arjona, Community Representative - Ballard
- Becky Asencio, Seattle Public Schools
- Brian King, Community Representative – West Seattle
- Bryce Yadon, Futurewise
- Colleen Echohawk, Chief Seattle Club
- Dave Gering, Manufacturing Industrial Council
- Deb Barker, Community Representative –West Seattle
- Erin Goodman, SODO Business Improvement Area
- Greg Nickels, Former Mayor of Seattle
- Hamilton Gardiner, West Seattle Chamber
- Jon Scholes, Downtown Seattle Association
- Julia Park, Community Representative – Ballard
- Katie Garrow, Martin Luther King Labor Council
- Maiko Winkler-Chin, Seattle Chinatown-International District Preservation & Development Authority
- Mark Nagle, Expedia
- Mike Stewart, Ballard Alliance
- Robert Cardona, Community Representative - Uptown
- Ron Severt, Space Needle
- Savitha Reddy Pathi, Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience
- Scott Rusch, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
- Walter Reese, Nucor Steel
- Warren Aakervik, Community Representative - Freight

NOTE – the following SAG members were not in attendance:

- Abigail Doerr, Transportation Choices Coalition
- Ginny Gilder, Force 10 Hoops/Seattle Storm
- Larry Yok, Community Representative – Chinatown-International District
- Paul Lambros, Plymouth Housing
- Peter Schrappen, Northwest Marine Trade Association
- Steve Lewis, Alliance for People with disAbilities
- Willard Brown, Delridge Neighborhood Development Association



Agency directors, project leads and staff in attendance were:

- Andrea Burnett, Community Outreach Supervisor, Sound Transit
- Cathal Ridge, Central Corridor Director, Sound Transit
- Diane Adams, Facilitator
- Jim Parsons, Consultant Project Manager, HNTB
- Kate Lichtenstein, Senior Project Manager, Sound Transit
- Leda Chahim, Government & Community Relations Manager, Sound Transit
- Ron Endlich, Project Director, Sound Transit
- Stephen Mak, High Capacity Transit Development Manager, Sound Transit

### **Agenda Item #2 – Previous meeting summary**

Diane reviewed the meeting summary from the first SAG meeting, highlighting key points from the project overview presentation and chartering discussion. She noted that feedback provided by SAG members on project guiding principles during the last meeting is being shared with the Elected Leadership Group and that they will finalize the guiding principles at a future meeting. She also pointed out that the SAG meeting schedule had been updated based on member feedback.

### **Agenda Item #3 – What we heard during early scoping**

Cathal Ridge, Sound Transit, presented an overview of the metrics and comment themes from early scoping. Sound Transit hosted an agency meeting, in-person open houses in West Seattle, Downtown and Ballard and an online open house to provide information and solicit input. Notifications for these events included postcards, online and print advertisements, updates via email, social media and the project website, press releases, invitation letters to agencies and more. In total, over 2,800 comments were received during early scoping. Seven hundred people attended the three open houses, over 5,000 visited the online open house and eight agencies and the Muckleshoot Tribe participated in the agency meeting. Cathal gave a high-level summary of the types of input provided including comments on the route, station locations, impacts, benefits and operations. There were also comments on the purpose and need, which Sound Transit will work to incorporate, and a few which fall out of the scope of the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions project scope. The comments provided during early scoping will be captured in an Early Scoping Summary Report to be released as soon as April 2018.

Following the overview of early scoping metrics and comment themes, SAG members were split into three groups to review alignment and station concepts that were developed based on the feedback Sound Transit received during early scoping. The concepts presented were denoted by marker lines on maps with callout boxes for key comment themes. The following Sound Transit staff led the small group discussions:

- Ron Endlich: SODO, Downtown/South Lake Union/Seattle Center
- Stephen Mak: West Seattle/Duwamish
- Kate Lichtenstein: Interbay/Ballard

Questions and comments from SAG members at each breakout group included the following:



## West Seattle and Duwamish

Q: How will the tracks go over the West Seattle Bridge?

A: It will be a structure roughly as tall as the West Seattle Bridge.

Q: Will evacuations be feasible at 140 feet above the ground?

A: Sound Transit has not reached that point in the study process. We will be coordinating with the Seattle Fire Department to determine evacuation procedures.

Q: Are there any similar transit-only bridges?

A: Sound Transit is looking into other similar structures.

Q: Do you have estimates for ridership for these alignment concepts?

A: We have an estimate of ridership from the ST3 plan for the entire representative project. Ridership estimates will be updated as part of the Level 3 screening process.

Q: Has a Harbor Island station been considered?

A: Although it has been suggested by a few commenters, a station on Harbor Island was not identified in the ST3 Plan.

Q: How is the budget being determined?

A: The current cost estimates are based on the representative project. Cost estimates for each alternative will be part of the evaluation process.

Q: Are elevated tracks generally less expensive than a tunnel?

A: Generally, yes. However, there are many factors (i.e. soil conditions, utility lines, real estate and potential impacts) to take into consideration.

Q: Which areas voiced support for a tunnel?

A: Comments related to a tunnel in West Seattle mostly noted the Junction.

C: Sound Transit should consider putting tracks over the West Seattle Bridge to limit impacts to the areas north and south of the bridge.

Q: Are the comments about terminal station location about both the orientation and location?

A: Yes, they generally referred to both factors.

C: (Pointing to the concept that has the Delridge station between Terminal 5 and the West Seattle Bridge) This Delridge station would likely have lower ridership than other stations in the area.

C: Sound Transit could look at building the tracks at-grade, similar to what is existing on Martin Luther King Jr. Way in the Rainier Valley.

C: Stations could be consolidated to the densest areas along the route.

C: Freight corridors must be maintained throughout the project area.



## SODO, Downtown and South Lake Union

Q: Why do the representative project and presented alternatives not include an additional Stadium Station?

A: Due to constraints in the station area, there is only room for one station. People traveling to the stadiums would need to transfer at the SODO or Downtown stations. One alternative does accommodate the construction of two Stadium stations (the surface E-3 alternative) but it requires the use of a portion of Ryerson Base right-of-way to create the wider space needed for the second station at this location.

Q: Can vehicles travel on the streets under the elevated tracks in SODO, similar to the Monorail on 5th Avenue?

A: Although cross-street traffic will be able to cross east-west under the elevated guideway, there does not appear to be sufficient right-of-way to re-establish two-way bus operations beneath the elevated guideway once construction is completed on the E-3 facility.

Q: Would trains stop at intersections?

A: No. Trains would have priority through intersections.

Q: Would the grades from the Duwamish River crossing to a SODO tunnel portal be feasible?

A: Yes, there is plenty of distance to make the connection without having grade issues.

Q: What are the impacts of a cut-and-cover tunnel?

A: There would be impacts in the area from excavation and lane restrictions during construction. Additional information on construction issues will be forthcoming as the alternatives are refined.

Q: Would a potential roadway overcrossing of the tracks negatively impact freight mobility?

A: No. The overcrossing would provide additional options for east-west freight movement without the risk of delay found at current gated at-grade rail crossings.

Q: What is the distance between the South Lake Union stations in the representative project?

A: They are roughly a half-mile apart by track distance but with the curve between the Denny and SLU stations the straight line distance between these station sites is somewhat shorter resulting in some overlap of the quarter-mile walk radius around these stations.

C: One of the alternatives could look at having a station entrance/exit on the south side of Denny Way.

Q: With new plans to renovate Key Arena, could Sound Transit build park-and-ride lots outside of downtown for commuters and events?

A: Currently, the City of Seattle does not allow new park-and-ride facilities inside city limits. Sound Transit's WSBLE project budget also does not include funding for parking facilities.

C: How many people can feasibly access the stations should be part of the analysis.

C: Mercer Street is a major freight corridor to I-5.

Q: What are the soil conditions in Uptown? Would those impact the bored tunnel in the area?



A: There aren't any known soil condition issues in the Uptown area but future soil analysis will determine if there are any potential complications. There are also several major utility lines underneath streets in Queen Anne, Uptown and South Lake Union that will also need further assessment.

#### Interbay and Ballard

Q: Generally, what is more expensive, a tunnel or an elevated structure?

A: Tunnels are generally more expensive, but the specific costs are not yet known.

C: If the alignment or a station is moved closer to the cruise terminal, it will not provide access to the boats. There would still need to be a shuttle to get people from the station to the boats.

C: 15th Avenue W is the only north-south freight route in Seattle and should be maintained.

C: Moving the alignment further west is not a bad idea. Sound Transit should consider density. Stations may not be feasible in certain areas due to all the redevelopment that's happening.

Q: Did Sound Transit receive any early scoping comments that suggested moving the alignment to the north side of Queen Anne to serve Seattle Pacific University?

A: There were a few comments that suggested an alignment that is closer to alignments looked at during the ST3 process.

Q: Is King County Metro considering circulator buses to connect people to the stations?

A: Metro has future plans (through Metro Connects) to get people to stations.

C: Sound Transit should encourage and incentivize people to use transit to get to stations, rather than drive.

Q: What did early scoping comments say about the Interbay station? Was there anything negative?

A: Sound Transit received some comments about where to place the station, calling for it to be closer to Queen Anne or closer to Magnolia.

C: West Mercer Place is currently very congested. Freight will use that route if they aren't allowed in the new SR 99 tunnel. A station in the area would make the route unfeasible.

Q: How tall would a fixed bridge need to be over Salmon Bay?

A: Sound Transit is still looking into this. For context, the Aurora Bridge is 136 feet tall. Future work with the Coast Guard will inform alternatives.

C: The type of structures used for the approaches to a fixed-span bridge should be presented early so people are informed when providing feedback.

Q: What is the duration of the (existing) Ballard Bridge openings?

A: They vary by season. Typical openings average four to six minutes.

Q: Has any soil analysis been done for potential tunnel alignments?

A: We'll be looking at soil conditions if potential alternatives include tunnels.



Q: Can Sound Transit tunnel under a park? Is there precedence for that?

A: We will be working with the City of Seattle to determine where tunnel alignments would be allowed and feasible.

Q: How would Queen Anne residents access the Interbay station?

A: Queen Anne residents could use Dravus Street to access station.

C: It appears that Queen Anne and Magnolia have less access to stations than other neighborhoods along the corridor.

Diane reconvened the group and SAG members shared the following reflections from the discussions:

- Happy to see so many concepts on the table.
- Station orientation input was insightful and shows that commenters are educated on the project and Sound Transit's long-term plans.
- Freight mobility should be part of the conversation early to inform the development of early alternatives.
- Consolidating stations should be done only if significant population and/or job centers do not lose easy access to light rail and other transit options.

#### **Agenda Item #4 – Alternatives evaluation framework**

Jim Parsons, Sound Transit, began an overview of the alternatives evaluation framework. Jim explained that the concepts presented during the breakout groups will be developed into alternatives (by segment) and then screened at the end of each level using increasingly detailed information and criteria. During level three screening the segments will be combined into corridor-wide alternatives. Jim reviewed the measures and methods that will be used at each level of screening, noting that level one will be more qualitative and levels two and three will be more quantitative. At each level, alternatives will be screened out or further refined until the Sound Transit Board identifies a preferred alternative at the end of level three screening.

One SAG member called on Sound Transit to look into how the alternatives would impact the environment, including, but not limited to, their contribution to global warming.

Jim proceeded to review the project purpose and need statements and noted which criteria and measures would be used during level one. SAG members posed the following comments and questions regarding the respective criteria and measures:

#### Reliable service and travel times

- Can travel times be a quantitative criterion during level one screening?
- Light rail riders' experience (i.e. safety, comfort, views, etc.) should be considered.

#### Regional connectivity, projected transit demand and transit capacity

- What data is being used to model future conditions?
  - PSRC data will be used to model future conditions.

#### Regional growth centers served and Sound Transit Long-Range Plan consistency

- PSRC is due to come out with updated data in six months. Can that be used to screen alternatives?
  - The analysis will use the most recent data available.
- In addition to meeting ADA requirements, accommodations should be made for service animals.

#### ST3 consistency, financial sustainability and technical feasibility

- Would the consolidation of stations be feasible under these criteria?
  - The evaluation will examine suggestions to consolidate stations and whether doing so would be consistent with the package approved by voters in 2016.
- Given the amount of public investment going into Sound Transit projects, there is an opportunity to pursue technical and sustainable options, such as solar panels on trains that demonstrate the region's commitment to sustainability.

#### Historically underserved populations

- Does Sound Transit have a process similar to the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Toolkit? If no, can Sound Transit coordinate with the City to use it?
  - Sound Transit is coordinating closely with the City of Seattle to apply the toolkit to the project.
- What is the definition of historically underserved populations?
  - We believe the definition for historically underserved populations that Sound Transit is using in this context is consistent with the executive order that governs our environmental justice analyses. We can get back to you with more details.
- Unions that represent industrial workers should be consulted to develop a criterion that addresses freight mobility and industrial-specific concerns.
- What is the definition of a station area?
  - Currently, station area is defined as a half mile around a station. That may be updated to account for transportation connections, street networks and population centers.

#### Local land use plan consistency, station area development opportunities and modal integration

- Regarding land use plans, some areas may not have applicable land use plans.
- Will current or future land use plans be used in screening alternatives?
  - Yes, Sound Transit will consider adopted land use plans in the alternatives screening.
- Regarding transit-oriented development within station areas, does Sound Transit intend to mandate affordability requirements for developers? If yes, what will those be?
  - Affordable housing goals, as well as other development goals, for transit oriented development on Sound Transit's surplus property are identified by working with the local community and jurisdiction. The goals must be consistent with ST Board policy (and requirements under RCW 81.112.350).
- Freight mobility should be included and prioritized as part of modal integration.
- Accessibility for people walking and people on bikes should be a priority to increase options for multimodal trips that use light rail.

#### Environmental effects and traffic operations

- Circulator lines should be utilized around the stations to provide access for people with limited mobility.
- Could freight mobility be evaluated separately from traffic?



- Sound Transit will look into creating a new criterion to screen alternatives based on impacts to freight mobility.

Following the discussion of criteria and measures, Jim Parsons described how feedback and questions from the SAG members will be incorporated into criteria used to evaluate the alternatives. He also clarified that Sound Transit does not have a goal for the number of alternatives advanced through each level of screening.

**Agenda Item #5 – Neighborhood forums**

Andrea Burnett, Sound Transit, provided an overview of the upcoming neighborhood forums. She shared the purpose and plan for the meetings and noted that the dates and venues would be finalized and shared as soon as possible. The neighborhood forums will be an opportunity for community members to work with their neighbors in small groups to identify values and discuss their vision for light rail in their respective neighborhoods.

SAG members posed the following comments and questions regarding the neighborhood forums:

- The neighborhood forum in SODO should be held during working hours to ensure people who commute to SODO from other neighborhoods can attend.
- Can the discussion questions or agenda be distributed prior to the forums?
- Given the project timeline, high school students in the area should be involved as they will be a group that relies on light rail once the lines are completed.
- In addition to the neighborhood forums, does Sound Transit plan to continue briefing community organizations?
  - Yes. Organizations that would like a briefing should please reach out to Sound Transit.

Cathal Ridge added that Sound Transit’s goal is to involve the public in ways that cater to the communities’ needs throughout the project area. He asked SAG members to consider ways Sound Transit could reach more individuals and groups and share their feedback throughout the process. He concluded by stating that the feedback SAG members provided will inform the criteria as they are further developed; the discussion to further refine Level 2 and 3 screening criteria will occur during future meetings.

**Agenda Item #6 – Next steps and next meeting**

Diane Adams thanked the SAG members for attending the meeting and being available to be part of the planning process. The group expressed interest in attending a corridor tour. The next SAG meeting is scheduled for April 17 at Union Station.

	<b>Action Item</b>
<b>1.</b>	Schedule the SODO neighborhood forum during working hours
<b>2.</b>	Consider distributing neighborhood forum discussion questions/ agenda prior to the meetings
<b>3.</b>	Look into organizing a tour of the project corridor for SAG members
<b>4.</b>	Follow up on questions regarding Sound Transit’s definition of, and plans for, affordable housing
<b>5.</b>	Consider separating the screening criteria for automobiles and parking from freight mobility