



West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions

Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting #6 – June 20, 2018

Meeting Notes – DRAFT

Agenda Item #1 – Welcome and introductions

Diane Adams, Facilitator, welcomed the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) members to the group's sixth meeting. She confirmed the agenda and briefly recapped the group's progress to-date.

Agency directors, project leads and staff in attendance were:

- Cathal Ridge, Central Corridor Director, Sound Transit
- Diane Adams, Facilitator
- Ron Endlich, Project Director, Sound Transit
- Kate Lichtenstein, Senior Project Manager, Sound Transit
- Stephen Mak, High Capacity Transit Development Manager, Sound Transit
- Leda Chahim, Government & Community Relations Manager, Sound Transit
- Carrie Avila-Mooney, Government & Community Relations Manager, Sound Transit
- Sandra Fann, High Capacity Transit Development Manager, Sound Transit
- Wesley King, Central Corridor Operations Director, Sound Transit
- Jim Parsons, Consultant Project Manager, HNTB
- David Shelton, Central Segment Lead, HNTB
- KaDeena Yerkan, External Engagement, EnviroIssues

SAG members in attendance were:

- Brian King, Community Representative – West Seattle
- Bryce Yadon, Futurewise
- Deb Barker, Community Representative – West Seattle
- Erin Goodman, SODO Business Improvement Area
- Greg Nickels, Former Mayor of Seattle
- Hamilton Gardiner, West Seattle Chamber
- Larry Yok, Community Representative – Chinatown-International District
- Mark Nagle, Expedia
- Peter Schrappen, Northwest Marine Trade Association
- 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
- Steve Lewis, Alliance of People with disAbilities
- Walter Reese, Nucor Steel
- Warren Aakervik, Community Representative – Freight
- Willard Brown, Delridge Neighborhood Development Association



NOTE – the following SAG members were not in attendance:

- Andres Arjona, Community Representative – Ballard
- Becky Asencio, Seattle Public Schools Abigail Doerr, Transportation Choices Coalition
- Colleen Echohawk, Chief Seattle Club
- Katie Garrow, Martin Luther King Labor Council
- Dave Gering, Manufacturing Industrial Council
- Ginny Gilder, Force 10 Hoops/Seattle Storm
- Julia Park, Community Representative – Ballard
- Jon Scholes, Downtown Seattle Association
- Mike Stewart, Ballard Alliance
- Maiko Winkler-Chin, Seattle Chinatown-International District Preservation & Development Authority

Agenda Item #2 – Previous meeting summary

Diane noted that the meeting #5 summary had been added to SAG members' binders and reviewed highlights from the previous meeting.

Agenda Item #3 – Community engagement and collaboration

Leda Chahim, Sound Transit, provided an update on the community engagement schedule. She highlighted changes to the timing and format for the second round of neighborhood forums, which will now be held in September 2018. She noted that Sound Transit provided over 20 briefings to various groups in May and June. Leda encouraged SAG members to reach out if groups they work or volunteer with would like a briefing. In closing, Leda encouraged SAG members to provide input on the outreach process to-date via the online survey.

Agenda Item #4 – Level 2 alternatives

Cathal Ridge, Sound Transit, reviewed the alternatives development process, study segments and list of Level 2 alternatives before handing it over to the segment leads to review the Level 2 alternatives in detail.

West Seattle and Duwamish

Stephen Mak, Sound Transit, presented the West Seattle and Duwamish alternatives for Level 2. See the [PowerPoint presentation](#) for additional details about each alternative.

- ST3 Representative Project
- Pigeon Ridge/West Seattle Tunnel
- Oregon Street/Alaska Junction/Elevated
- Oregon Street/Alaska Junction/Tunnel (new)
- Golf Course/Alaska Junction/Tunnel (modified)

SODO and Chinatown-International District



Ron Endlich, Sound Transit, presented the SODO and Chinatown-International District alternatives for Level 2. See the [PowerPoint presentation](#) for additional details about each alternative.

- ST3 Representative Project
- Massachusetts Tunnel Portal
- Surface E-3

Downtown

Ron Endlich presented the Downtown alternatives for Level 2. See the [PowerPoint presentation](#) for additional details about each alternative.

- ST3 Representative Project
- 5th/Harrison
- 6th/Boren/Roy
- 5th/Terry/Roy/Mercer (new)

Interbay and Ballard

Kate Lichtenstein, Sound Transit, presented the Ballard and Interbay alternatives for Level 2. See the [PowerPoint presentation](#) for additional details about each alternative.

- ST3 Representative Project
- 15th/Fixed Bridge/15th
- 20th/Fixed Bridge/17th
- 20th/Tunnel/15th
- Armory Way/Tunnel/14th
- Central Interbay/14th
 - Movable bridge
 - Fixed bridge (new)
- Central Interbay/Tunnel/15th (new)

Agenda Item #5 – Level 2 screening criteria – incorporating feedback

Sandra Fann, Sound Transit, walked through feedback on the criteria, measures and methods. She also provided answers to the following questions posed by SAG members during previous meetings:

Q: How is ridership potential measured?

A: PSRC 2040 population and employment data will be used to estimate ridership potential at Level 2.

Q: What is meant by “historically underserved” populations?

A: Historically underserved populations include minority and low-income populations.

Q: How is access for historically underserved populations assessed?

A: The assessment will provide a comparison of how different alternatives provide access for historically underserved populations in the areas that will be served by light rail.



Q: Why switch between Federal, State and local standards among the different criteria?

A: Different resources are protected at different levels of government. The measure for each evaluation criterion is identified on a case-by-case basis according to the most applicable or relevant standard.

Q: How are inflating construction costs accounted for?

A: Cost estimates will be based on existing 2017 dollars and compared to ST3 cost estimates adjusted from 2014 to 2017 dollars.

C: Concern regarding use of proposed legislation for assessment of equitable development opportunities.

A: Change has been made to criteria to qualitatively assess unique opportunities for equitable development enabled by station location and/or conceptual configuration.

Q: Are we considering economic effects during construction and in the final condition?

A: Yes, evaluation of economic impacts include both during construction and in the final condition.

Q: Are criteria and measures weighted?

A: Criteria and measures are not weighted. Each evaluation rating represents how well a given project alternative performs in that category relative to other project alternatives.

Q: Are we going to see the underlying data for ratings?

A: The underlying data will be available to support the ratings presented for Level 2. The data will be presented to allow for consideration of mixing and matching various elements of different alternatives and to inform what is carried forward into Level 3 screening.

Sandra highlighted the additional measure below which will be used during Level 2:

- Station area land use plan consistency
 - Station locations consistent with current local land use plans

A SAG member asked how schedule considerations are being factored into the cost estimates. Sandra clarified that during Level 2, Sound Transit is estimating construction costs for all alternatives in 2017 dollars to provide a consistent comparison. Schedule considerations will be considered and shared when more technical information is available.

Agenda Item #6 – CID and SODO updates

Diane Adams transitioned the meeting into presentations on the additional alternatives being developed and evaluated for Chinatown-International District and SODO. Ron Endlich walked through the process and timeline to identify, review and evaluate these additional alternatives, highlighting that partner agencies were involved in developing and vetting the potential alternatives. In addition to involving partner agencies, Sound Transit has been actively engaging with potentially impacted communities.

SODO



Stakeholder Advisory Group and Elected Leadership Group recommendations on the SODO alternatives during Level 1 screening directed Sound Transit to look at new alternatives in SODO. Ron highlighted the following community interests/concerns and operational needs that informed the additional alignment and station alternatives in SODO:

- Community concerns:
 - Providing service to destinations within SODO.
 - Facilitating transfers at the SODO Station.
 - Determining how the E-3 Busway can be utilized.
 - Maintaining freight mobility within and through SODO.
 - Safety.
- Operational needs:
 - Providing a connection to the maintenance facility.
 - Connecting the new line to the existing transit tunnel.
 - Establishing an interim terminus from when the West Seattle and Ballard lines open.
 - Managing track connections.

A suite of potential routes, as well as key concerns to consider, were developed during an agency workshop. Ron presented two alternatives that were developed in response to the community concerns, operational needs and agency feedback. One would run further west, with a potential station location on Occidental Avenue South, and connect to the existing line just south of the Stadium Station. The other would run just east of the other alternatives, primarily along 6th Avenue South, with a station adjacent to the existing SODO Station. Ron reiterated that each of these alternatives would come with additional challenges. Sound Transit is still working to determine their feasibility.

Questions (Q) and comments (C) from SAG members, as well as answers (A) provided by Sound Transit staff, for each section during the breakout group discussions included the following:

Q: Would connections to the operations and maintenance facility (OMF) displace any industrial buildings?

A: Connection to the OMF will likely have different challenges for different alignments, but specific impacts are not yet known.

Q: Could the existing tracks be used to access the OMF?

A: There would be substantial challenges with direction of travel, crossovers and capacity with using the existing tracks.

Q: Would there be any road closures with the current Level 2 alternatives?

A: The E3 Surface alternative could require closure of Royal Brougham between 4th and 6th.

Q: How far along is the planning process for relocating buses from the E-3 Busway?

A: Sound Transit is engaging with King County Metro (Metro) and all parties are aware of the future need to plan for the relocation of buses if the E-3 Busway is utilized for the WSBLE project.

Q: Are all operational needs weighted the same?

A: An interim terminus is a critical operational component of the WSBLE project. Other operational requirements may have different solutions for different project alternatives.



C: Although the businesses along 1st Avenue South are just within a 10-minute walkshed, they would be much better served by an alignment on Occidental Avenue South.

Q: What are the benefits of the 6th Avenue South alignment?

A: Potential future land use is the main consideration as well as preserving future use of the E3 roadway for buses.

C: 6th Avenue South is a key freight corridor that functions well and should not be compromised.

C: Once the Lander crossing is completed, it will become an important freight route as it eliminates potential delays at rail crossings.

C: A local circulator bus route could be useful to facilitate connections to transit hubs within SODO.

Q: How does Sound Transit plan to evaluate these new alternatives for freight mobility?

A: Potential effects on freight mobility during construction and in the ultimate configuration will be assessed for the new alternatives.

Q: Did the SODO BIA Transportation Committee prefer one of these alternatives over the other?

A: There seemed to be a preference for the new alternative west of the E-3 Busway, as opposed to the 6th Ave alternative.

Q: Was BNSF at the SODO BIA Transportation Committee meeting yesterday? They are constructing a large building near your Occidental alignment.

A: No. But we will engage them as these continue to be developed.

Q: For each station location, are we going to get the same metrics for ridership and how traffic is impacted?

A: Sound Transit will evaluate the new alternatives using the Level 1 evaluation measures, which include ridership potential and traffic circulation and impacts.

Q: Would the Occidental alternative have to backtrack to access the OMF?

A: The line would have to connect to the OMF in some way. We will be assessing whether the line could potentially backtrack from Stadium Station, or whether a new line to the facility would need to be constructed further south, for example.

Q: What are the major freight and transit roads in SODO?

A: 1st Avenue South and 4th Avenue South are both important for freight and 4th Ave South is a major transit corridor. Also, 6th Avenue South carries a lot of freight traffic.

Q: Would using 6th Avenue South allow you to avoid the E-3 Busway?

A: The 6th Ave South alternative would have less impacts on the E-3 Busway but conflicts at the tie-in immediately south of the Stadium Station would still need to be resolved.

Q: Does the Port of Seattle utilize Occidental Avenue South?

A: There is some Port use, but it is primarily used by trucks accessing loading docks.



Q: With an Occidental light rail station, has safety been considered given the amount of freight movement around the station?

A: Safety considerations around the station will need to be evaluated if this alternative is carried forward.

Q: Has the Port weighed in on the Occidental alternative?

A: Generally, the Port has shared concerns about freight mobility, though they have not formally weighed in on the Occidental alternative.

Q: How big of a deal is it if BNSF is not involved in the conversation?

A: BNSF will be engaged if alternatives crossing their tracks are carried forward.

C: Freight safety is very different than bicycle safety or walkability safety. "Safety" as a concern is generic and should be more specific. The safety criteria should be broken into more categories to cover the consideration of each mode.

Q: Are there any plans for SODO to be rezoned? Or will it stay industrial?

A: The city of Seattle has recently convened a larger conversation on the future of industrial lands. We do not know of any current plans for rezoning.

C: The alignment along Occidental Avenue South would conflict with Port operations.

C: There are concerns about moving buses off the E-3 Busway as many use those bus routes to get to work. Moving the buses and shifting traffic patterns would likely result in business and community impacts.

C: There would be various conflicts with an alignment along Occidental Avenue South.

Q: Is there any incentive to make SODO a more pedestrian-friendly area?

A: There are a variety of projects being planned to improve safety and walkability. If there are more people using transit in the area, improvements could be prioritized.

C: Train crossings in SODO make the area difficult to reliably navigate.

C: The focus should be on people who work in SODO, rather than on the stadiums.

C: There are many activities and jobs in SODO that are 24 hours per day. Shift-workers cannot use light rail due to the limited hours.

Chinatown-International District

Stakeholder Advisory Group and Elected Leadership Group recommendations on the Chinatown-International District alternatives during Level 1 screening directed Sound Transit to look a station location at 4th Ave. Ron answered previous questions about construction methods by providing an overview of cut-and-cover stations, open-cut stations and mined stations and provided examples of stations in the Seattle area utilizing those construction methods for context. Ron then shared the



following community concerns and construction constraints that provide context for the new potential alternatives in the C-ID:

- Community concerns:
 - Avoiding construction impacts.
 - Improving intermodal connections.
 - Activating Union Station.
- Construction constraints:
 - Limited right-of-way.
 - Poor soil conditions.
 - Deep piles under 4th Avenue, Union Station and the International District/Chinatown Station.
 - Conflicts with the existing transit tunnel structures.

The following potential station locations were identified:

- Chinatown-International District Station at 5th Avenue South (cut-and-cover, bored tunnel/mined station)
- Chinatown-International District Station at 4th Avenue South (cut-and-cover, revised cut-and-cover and bored tunnel options).
- Chinatown-International District Station under Union Station (bored tunnel).

Ron highlighted a variety of construction constraints in the area that are being considered in the analysis of the additional station locations. See the [PowerPoint presentation](#) for more information about the alternatives and considerations.

Questions (Q) and comments (C) from SAG members, as well as answers (A) provided by Sound Transit staff, for each section during the breakout group discussions included the following:

Q: What is the load capacity for the temporary decking above cut-and-cover construction?

A: The decking is designed to handle heavy freight. There would likely not be any load limits.

Q: When was the last time the piers that support the 4th Avenue South viaduct were replaced?

A: We are investigating this question. It is our understanding that some elements of the original structure have been retrofitted.

C: Chinatown-International District is one of the only neighborhoods in Seattle that is predominantly people of color and elderly. Impacts should be limited as much as possible to maintain the integrity of this key community.

Q: Where would the cut-and-cover station be along 5th Avenue South?

A: There are a couple of potential station locations, including adjacent to the existing IDS station and straddling South Jackson Street.

Q: What would the impacts be with a bored tunnel/ mined station?

A: There would likely be fewer impacts as most of the work would occur deep underground.



C: If the bored tunnel is selected, there would be several options to transport the material out by belt and barge.

Q: Is the SAG expected to rank the new alternatives?

A: No. At this meeting, the goal is to deepen understanding of the alternatives and the potential opportunities and challenges with each.

C: Replacing the 4th Avenue South viaduct would likely need to be approved by voters. This would come with substantial political risk if it is identified as the preferred alternative.

C: Having a station underneath Union Station is an exciting proposition.

C: Impacts along 5th Avenue South would be very challenging for the businesses.

C: The existing connections between modes near Union Station is difficult. Improving these connections would facilitate easier regional mobility.

Q: How deep would the underground connection be?

A: It would need to be below the BNSF railway, but the exact depth is not yet known.

C: Union Station is not typically viewed as being part of Chinatown-International District. There is a stark divide between the areas east and west of 5th Avenue South. In general, the borders of the district are South Jackson Street, 5th Avenue South and South Weller Street.

C: There are additional community concerns in Chinatown-International District, including impacts to elderly and low-income populations and communities of color, as well as impacts to small businesses and Uwajimaya.

Q: Do any of these options provide better opportunities to access the stations?

A: The stations are a block apart. The alternatives under 5th Avenue South would provide better access to Chinatown-International District and may allow for easier light rail to light rail transfers. The other two may provide better access to King Street Station (Amtrak and Sounder).

Q: Would the streetcar on South Jackson Street remain?

A: Yes. However, there may be temporary construction impacts.

Q: Do the soil conditions in Pioneer Square present a fatal flaw?

A: They are not a fatal flaw but are a concern and could result in additional construction costs.

Q: How deep is the Beacon Hill Station?

A: It is about 160-180 feet.

C: Having an underground connection between the existing and new stations is critical for mobility.

Q: Why does there need to be a second Chinatown-International District Station?

A: The new station will be part of the new light rail tunnel that goes to Ballard. This station and Westlake will be critical for transfers between light rail lines.



Q: For the bored tunnel, although there would be few property impacts, could Union Station be damaged?

A: This will be part of the evaluation of construction feasibility.

Q: Has Vulcan weighed in on these options?

A: They have not weighed in yet on these latest options.

Q: What are the major downsides to the representative alignment station?

A: The representative project includes a cut-and-cover tunnel and station in the Chinatown-International District. There are concerns about construction impacts with this type of tunnel and station construction. Currently, there is a Level 2 alternative that reduces those impacts by reducing the length of in-street cut-and-cover construction and instead using a bored tunnel, however there would still be cut-and-cover construction for the station itself.

Q: How many vehicles would be disrupted by an alternative along 4th Avenue South?

A: We believe 4th Avenue is used by approximately 35,000 vehicles per day – that will be part of our assessment going forward.

Q: What would the construction duration be for the other options (not the cut and cover)?

A: It is not known yet.

Q: With the representative alignment, how long would all of 5th Avenue South be closed?

A: The whole street would not be closed. Under the currently envisioned construction approach, half the street would need to be closed during the first approximately 12 months and final 6 months of station construction.

C: The challenges of a 4th Avenue South station seem to outweigh the benefits.

Q: How many people transfer from light rail to heavy rail daily?

A: There are about 25,000 daily passengers at Union Station. The majority of these are commuter trips.

C: Rebuilding or retrofitting the 4th Avenue viaduct would likely be a multi-year project and could delay the project. In addition, traffic impacts would be significantly larger than any other option.

C: Are there ways to further reduce the impacts of an alignment on 5th Ave?

Agenda Item #7 – Station Planning 101

Sloan Dawson, Sound Transit, presented on the considerations that go into Station Planning. The scope of station planning includes supporting the alternatives development process, advancing design concepts to assist the evaluation of station locations and identifying opportunities and challenges to be studied during the EIS phase. Sloan walked through the key considerations that are integral to successfully placing stations in an urban environment. These include:

- Integrating light rail into different uses and scales.
- Planning around freight routes that serve industrial lands.



- Facilitating connections to transit corridors and greenways.

Sloan noted that adding light rail service and infrastructure creates a community hub and stressed the importance of providing safe connections for all modes and users while also maintaining mobility in the surrounding area. He highlighted the need to support future development so more people can easily access and utilize light rail.

In closing, Sloan presented the ways in which the station planning and alternatives development processes inform each other. During Level 1 screening, the station area planning group established existing conditions and a baseline. During Level 2, they will be developing station concepts. During Level 3, specific opportunities for different station alternatives will be identified and evaluated.

Agenda Item #8 – Next steps and next meeting

Leda Chahim provided an update on the upcoming meetings during Level 2 screening. To give SAG members more time to discuss the Level 2 alternatives and identify their recommendations, an additional SAG meeting was added in September.

Diane Adams thanked SAG members for attending the group's sixth meeting. The next SAG meeting is scheduled for July 16 at Union Station.