



Date: November 2, 2010
To: Parks & Community Services Board
From: Camron Parker, Senior Planner
Parks & Community Services
Phil Harris, Senior Planner
Transportation Department
Subject: Update on East Link Light Rail Planning

Sound Transit will be releasing a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the East Link light rail project on Friday, November 12th, 2010. The release will be followed by a 60-day public comment period. There will be an open house and public hearing at Bellevue City Hall on November 30th, 2010. Parks & Community Services Board members are invited to attend.

The SDEIS is a companion document to the initial Draft EIS that was issued in 2008. The SDEIS adds additional potential alignments that can be considered by the Sound Transit Board of Directors when they identify a preferred alternative later in 2011.

General descriptions of the alternatives to be included in the SDEIS were provided to the Parks & Community Services Board in a memo dated July 6, 2010. For ease of reference those descriptions are repeated and updated in this memo.

B2M Alignment (from I-90 to Bellevue Way/112th Avenue SE “Y” intersection)

B2M is a modification of the B2 alignment studied in the initial DEIS. The modifications result in enough change in expected environmental impact that a separate study of the B2M was warranted for the Supplemental DEIS. The B2M Alternative includes the following elements:

- A new elevated exit from the center of I-90.
- An elevated profile on the east side of Bellevue Way to the South Bellevue Park & Ride.
- An elevated platform at the park and ride lot to serve a new 1400-stall multi-level parking garage.
- An alignment along the east side of Bellevue Way that transitions from an elevated structure at the park and ride to a retained cut below the grade of Bellevue Way.
- Consolidation of the current two driveways at the Winters House and Mercer Slough Blueberry Farm with one access point at a bridge over the retained cut. A lid would be placed over the cut immediately in front of the Winters House in order to preserve the front lawn of the house.
- Relocation of the Heritage Loop Trail between Winters House and the Farm.
- Temporary closure, up to three years, of park features during construction.

B2M Alignment (112th Avenue SE to downtown)

On July 22, the Sound Transit Board selected design options to include in the SDEIS for the 112th Avenue SE corridor. The proposed B2M alignment travels on the east side of 112th Avenue SE from Bellevue Way, with a station at SE 8th. The alignment then crosses over to the west side of 112th at the existing SE 6th Street intersection, continuing north to a tunnel portal on the south side of Main Street. A second design for an at-grade alternative through downtown is proposed to travel from the east side of 112th Avenue into the center median near SE 15th Street, travel in the median to SE 6th Street where it will cross to the west side of the street and continue to an at-grade alignment and station on the south side of Main Street between 110th Avenue NE and 108th Avenue NE.

Both options include impacts to the Mercer Slough Water Trail (located between 112th and the Bellefield Office Park) and to Surrey Downs Park. At Surrey Downs Park, it is expected that up to one acre of the 11 acre park would be needed for right-of-way along with changes to vehicular access due to the reconfigured 112th Avenue. Further, the timing of planned capital improvements to the park funded by the 2008 Parks and Natural Areas Levy may need to be reevaluated due to potential access limitations during light rail construction.

Next Steps

When the SDEIS is released, the City will study the document and prepare comments to provide to Sound Transit. These comments, along with all other comments provided by Bellevue residents and other interested parties will be considered and addressed by Sound Transit in their Final EIS, which is currently scheduled for release in spring 2011.

Concurrently, the Bellevue Transportation Department is commissioning conceptual engineering and a concept design report supporting the Bellevue City Council's preferred alignment (labeled B7 - Revised), which parallels Interstate 90 eastbound, turning north and proceeding to downtown using the BNSF rail corridor, 118th Avenue SE, and 114th Avenue SE connecting to a NE 2nd Street tunnel portal.

Information on how to participate in the SDEIS comment process will be available at the November 30th Open House at Bellevue City Hall as well as online at:

<http://projects.soundtransit.org/Projects-Home/East-Link-Project.xml>

If you have any questions about how these proposed alternatives impact park resources, please contact Camron Parker at (425) 452-2032 or cparker@bellevuewa.gov.