



City of Bellevue/South Downtown I-405 Access Study

Stakeholder Forum #2 Summary

July 23, 2020 6-8 p.m. | Zoom

Panelists

Bellevue Transportation Department

- Shuming Yan, Project Manager
- Marie Jensen, Public Involvement Manager

Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

- Karl Westby, PhD Traffic Engineering Manager
- Barrett Hanson, PE Engineering Manager

City of Bellevue staff

- Andrew Singelakis, City of Bellevue Transportation Department, Director
- Paula Stevens, City of Bellevue Transportation Department, Assistant Director

Facilitator and support

PRR, Engagement Consultant

- Laura LaBissoniere Miller, Facilitator
- Nancy Thai, Communications support
- Emma Dorazio, Notetaker

Overview

Welcome

Laura LaBissoniere Miller, facilitator, welcomed 20 stakeholders and introduced the panelists.

Andrew Singelakis, City of Bellevue Transportation Department director, welcomed the group to the second City of Bellevue South Downtown I-405 Access Study stakeholder forum and thanked everyone for their participation. Laura gave an overview of the virtual meeting logistics, including using the chat function and polling to make the forum more interactive.

Laura reviewed the forum objectives and agenda. The city's objectives included sharing the study alternatives, seeking input to narrow down the alternatives for further evaluation, answering stakeholder questions and sharing next steps. Please see Appendix A for the presentation.



Stakeholder forum #1 feedback

Shuming Yan, project manager, welcomed participants and recapped forum #1. During forum #1 the study team reviewed the study purpose and need, guiding principles, evaluation criteria, community and stakeholder engagement process, project timeline, stakeholder questions and next steps. Marie Jensen, public involvement manager, emphasized the value of stakeholder input and reviewed the results of the post-forum questionnaire from forum #1. Please see Appendix A for the questionnaire results.

Shuming shared additional feedback from the open-ended questions. Respondents stated a new I-405 interchange may improve or worsen congestion and may cause concerns about neighborhood traffic and safety and access to 114th Avenue. Respondents had additional questions about what alternatives the study team was considering and concerns with preserving access to 114th Avenue.

Alternative concepts

Shuming next introduced the study alternatives. The study team considered 12 alternatives between Northeast Second and Southeast Eighth streets, including a “no action” alternative.

Fatal flaw screening

The study team conducted a fatal flaw screening to check the alternatives for constructability and consistency with local, state and federal plans and policies, including the I-405 Master Plan.

Alternatives dropped

Shuming first reviewed the alternatives the city considered and dropped from further study:

- Half diamond interchange at Northeast Second Street with an extension east
- Half diamond interchange at Main Street
- Extended Northeast Second Street with westbound to southbound on-ramp
- Southeast Fifth Street overcrossing to 116th Avenue Northeast with a southbound on-ramp
- Southbound ramp to Express Toll Lane with braided ramp outside of Southeast Eighth Street

Please see Appendix B for a list of the dropped alternatives.

Remaining seven alternative concepts

Shuming gave an overview of the remaining seven alternatives¹. He made a point that further analysis will only occur for concepts that move to the next round of screening. Laura encouraged the stakeholders to participate in the polls to share their initial feedback. She highlighted additional

¹ One of the seven alternatives is the “no action” alternative that the study team did not poll during the forum.

Polling results for Northeast Second Street/Northeast Fourth Street One-Way Couplet (17 respondents)

Answer	Votes (Percentage)
I don't feel this is a suitable alternative	7 (41 percent)
I would like the city to continue studying this alternative	6 (35 percent)
I am unsure about this alternative	4 (24 percent)

#2 Southbound on-ramp and northbound overpass at Northeast Second Street

Next, Shuming introduced the southbound on-ramp and northbound overpass at Northeast Second Street alternative. The main advantage of this option is that it provides additional access to I-405 from downtown. A main disadvantage is that it does not include a new downtown-Wilburton connection. This alternative is flawed if it displaces access to 114th Avenue.

Stakeholders provided the following questions and comments and the study team responded:

- Can the study team combine the alternatives?
 - Yes, the preferred alternative can combine elements from different alternative concepts.
- Extending Northeast Second Street to 116th Avenue Northeast would go through a wetland.
 - The study team will analyze the impact on wetlands and buildings, pursuant to the evaluation criteria for the study.
- Would the city consider more than one of these alternatives as the preferred alternative?
 - Yes, the study team developed 12 alternatives, dropped five and will drop a few more prior to further, more detailed analysis. We will then identify a preferred alternative which could combine features from the remaining alternatives.
- This alternative is very close to the existing ramps at Northeast Fourth Street.
 - The study team will conduct traffic modeling to see how this alternative would affect existing interchanges.
- Could the southbound ramp from Northeast Second Street to I-405 fly over the roadway to avoid impacts to 114th Avenue?
 - Yes, this is possible, however there are challenges to overcome. The study team must consider where to place the bridge foundations and proximity to Northeast



Fourth Street ramps. The flyover ramp would also have to connect to the freeway closer to Southeast Eighth Street.

- This alternative appears to have significant impacts to the 200 property, Sheraton and Red Lion. How would the study team evaluate those impacts?
 - There are six to seven impact criteria, including impacts to existing property, right-of-way and wetlands. The study team will review those impacts for all alternatives.

Polling results for Southbound on-ramp and northbound overpass at Northeast Second Street (19 respondents)

Answer	Votes (Percentage)
I don't feel this is a suitable alternative	14 (74 percent)
I would like the city to continue studying this alternative	4 (21 percent)
I am unsure about this alternative	1 (5 percent)

#3 Northeast Second Street extension to Wilburton

The next alternative Shuming shared extends Northeast Second Street to Wilburton. He explained this alternative minimizes the impact of new ramps. An advantage is a new downtown-Wilburton connection. A disadvantage is no new access I-405 and Wilburton. One stakeholder shared their support for this connection. The stakeholders then voted in the poll without further discussion.

Polling results for Northeast Second Street extension to Wilburton (20 respondents)

Answer	Votes (Percentage)
I don't feel this is a suitable alternative	9 (45 percent)
I would like the city to continue studying this alternative	6 (30 percent)
I am unsure about this alternative	5 (25 percent)



- The East Main Station Area Plan calls for two lanes for vehicle traffic in each direction and there is no plan to reduce the number of lanes at 112th Avenue Southeast.
- This alternative is similar to Northeast Sixth Street HOV on-and off-ramps which seems useful. Can the study team share the traffic counts on those ramps including counts for this alternative?
 - If the study advances this alternative, they will conduct traffic modeling as part of the evaluation process.
- The study team should consider the unique transit/HOV nature of this alternative in the evaluation criteria.

Polling results for Express toll lane access to/from south at Southeast Sixth Street (18 respondents)

Answer	Votes (Percentage)
I don't feel this is a suitable alternative	3 (17 percent)
I would like the city to continue studying this alternative	13 (72 percent)
I am unsure about this alternative	2 (11 percent)

#5 Southeast Sixth Street overpass to 116th Avenue Northeast with southbound on-ramp

Shuming shared the Southeast Sixth Street overpass to 116th Avenue Northeast with southbound on-ramp alternative. Advantages include additional east-west connection and access to I-405. Disadvantages include not fitting well with the character and urban design of the East Main transit-oriented district and its location farther from downtown.

Stakeholders provided the following questions and comments and the study team responded:

- How would more ramps affect traffic backups on I-405?
 - The study team would need to conduct more detailed analysis to see what impacts this alternative may have on I-405 operation and what improvements can reduce backups on I-405.
 - The Bellevue to Lynnwood widening project to add a new lane in both directions and the Coal Creek Parkway widening project will help address southbound backups.
 - Will the new additional lanes be HOV?



- The new lanes between Bellevue and Lynnwood will extend the existing HOV/High-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes. The lane at Coal Creek Parkway will be general purpose.
 - The study team will need to consider how this alternative would work with these projects if it advances.
- This alternative will reduce backup on 114th Avenue.
 - Why does the study team think this alternative does not fit well with the East Main transit-oriented development?
 - The interchanges are vehicle-oriented and not transit- or pedestrian-oriented. This is a relative disadvantage, not a fatal flaw.
 - Can the study team please show existing ramps in the alternative maps?
 - Yes, the study team will revise the maps for future forums.

Polling results for Southeast Sixth Street overpass to 116th Avenue Northeast with southbound on-ramp (18 respondents)

Answer	Votes (Percentage*)
I don't feel this is a suitable alternative	3 (17 percent)
I would like the city to continue studying this alternative	14 (78 percent)
I am unsure about this alternative	1 (6 percent)

*Percentages add up to 101 percent due to rounding

6 Lake Hills Connector southbound on-ramp

Shuming shared the final alternative, the Lake Hills Connector southbound on-ramp. Advantages include providing I-405 southbound access from Wilburton. Disadvantages include no new downtown-Wilburton connection and no new access from downtown. Additionally, the study team will need to coordinate with Sound Transit for the East Link extension crossing.

Stakeholders provided the following questions and comments and the study team responded:

- Does the study team have information on the proportion of traffic volume expected from east of I-405 compared to west of I-405?
 - The study team can prepare to share more information about this at the next forum.
- Final plans for Sound Transit's ST3 phase are not expected until 2041 and should not preclude this option from advancing.





- The study team will work closely with Sound Transit.
- Can you explain the red line on 118th Avenue Southeast?
 - It shows the new ramp’s potential impact to this section of 118th Avenue Southeast in this alternative and adjacent property.
- Does this alternative include a new on-ramp on 118th Avenue Southeast?
 - No, it does not.

Polling results for Lake Hills Connector southbound on-ramp (18 respondents)

Answer	Votes (Percentage*)
I don't feel this is a suitable alternative	1 (6 percent)
I would like the city to continue studying this alternative	12 (67 percent)
I am unsure about this alternative	5 (28 percent)

*Percentages add up to 101 percent due to rounding

Evaluation process

Shuming shared that the study team will review traffic modeling and design to narrow down the number of alternatives. The study team will then complete a more detailed analysis using the evaluation criteria for the study – travel time, missing links, barriers, conflict points, impact on property development, align with adopted plans and urban design, cost, stakeholder input and public input.

Additional questions and comments

Study questions and comments

- Will the study team run a traffic movement scenario for each alternative?
 - The study team will conduct traffic modeling for each alternative that advances, but not a video simulation.
- Following the city’s process and recommendations, what are the next steps in terms of state and/or federal approvals?
 - The study team is working with the state and Federal Highway Administration to align the alternative with appropriate policies and guidelines. Funding will likely be up to the state legislature and is uncertain due to COVID-19 and revenue trends. The first step is for the city and state to identify a preferred alternative, then find funding for design, environmental documentation and construction.
- What is the status of the Grand Connection project and its relationship to the study?



- COVID-19 has significantly impacted funding for projects, the planned Grand Connection included. Interested stakeholders should contact Emil King from City of Bellevue Community Development Department.
- Does the impact to property development evaluation criteria consider commercial and residential?
 - Yes. The city will begin looking at zoning changes in the Wilburton area, east area of I-405, beginning in September. Council is considering land use code changes for the East Main Transit-Oriented District as well.
- Will the study team consider green objective criteria and how?
 - The study is a piece of an overall plan to integrate into a regional multimodal system. This study will help reduce idling and greenhouse gas emissions while other projects will improve bicycle and pedestrian corridors.
- The downtown core is more pedestrian friendly and walkable, with bike lanes, relative to Southeast Sixth Street so it seems like there would be more conflict locating a new overpass/on-ramp in the downtown core than the East Main transit-oriented development.
 - The study team will review vehicle-pedestrian and vehicle-bicycle impacts for all alternatives that advance.
- We need to find the safest and fastest way to get people out of Bellevue at the end of the workday so others can enjoy downtown Bellevue entertainment and dining.
- Where can we obtain a copy of the Citizen Advisory Committee vision for Wilburton?
 - We will share that out after the forum.
- Can you share the panelists' contact information?
 - Yes, we can provide this.
- Which alternatives do the panelists think will advance? Are there federal funds for this project or will the city need to fund the project with local taxes?
 - The city and state have not identified funding yet, but they will apply for state, regional and federal funding when opportunities arise.
 - The study team will rely on the evaluation criteria to identify a preferred alternative and will share more about the evaluation process and results at the next forum.
 - In addition to engineering considerations, the evaluation criteria consider environmental impacts, effects on walking and biking, safety and urban design, among others.



Timeline and next steps

Shuming thanked the stakeholders and encouraged them to continue to stay engaged throughout the study. He shared that during the next forum, the city and WSDOT will report on the outcomes of the evaluation process. He then reviewed the project timeline. The first online open house will run from August 3 through 21 and the next stakeholder forum is on August 27. The study team plans to meet with the City Council on September 28 and will identify a preferred alternative by November for Council consideration.

Attendees

Stakeholders in attendance:

1. Nanette Lescher, Bellecrest Neighborhood Association
2. Pete Aparico, Columbia Pacific Advisors
3. Rebecca Bloom, Columbia Pacific Advisors
4. Patrece Banks, Downtown Bellevue Residents Association
5. Walter Scott, Legacy Commercial
6. Mesha Averill, Legacy Commercial
7. Jennifer Anderson, Master Builders Association of King & Snohomish Counties
8. Jerry Hall, Master Builders Association of King & Snohomish Counties
9. Jessica Roe, McCullough Hill Leary PS
10. Brian Franklin, PMF Investments LLC
11. Tim Jackson, PMF Investments LLC
12. Rick Tupper, Puget Sound Hospitality
13. David Slight, Surrey Downs Community Club
14. Chris Forster, TENW
15. Kevin Wallace, Wallace Properties
16. Mon Wig, Wig Properties LLC
17. LeeAnn Guidotti, Wilburton Neighborhood Association
18. Santiago Naranjo, Wilburton Neighborhood Association
19. César Caycedo, Woodridge Neighborhood Association
20. Alex Smith, 700 112 LLC



Additional study team members in attendance:

1. Emil King, City of Bellevue Community Development, Assistant Director
2. Gillian Hagstrom, City of Bellevue Transportation Department, Community Outreach Intern
3. John Murphy, City of Bellevue Transportation Department, Acting Manager for Neighborhood Traffic Safety Services
4. Molly Johnson, City of Bellevue Transportation Department, Development Review Manager



Appendix A: Stakeholder Forum #2 Presentation

South Downtown I-405 Access Study

Stakeholder Forum #2

July 23, 2020





Shuming Yan
Project manager,
Bellevue Transportation
Department



Marie Jensen
Public involvement
manager,
Bellevue Transportation
Department



Barrett Hanson
Study work group,
WSDOT



Karl Westby
Study work group,
WSDOT

Panelists



Laura LaBissoniere
Miller, Community
engagement –
forum facilitator,
PRR

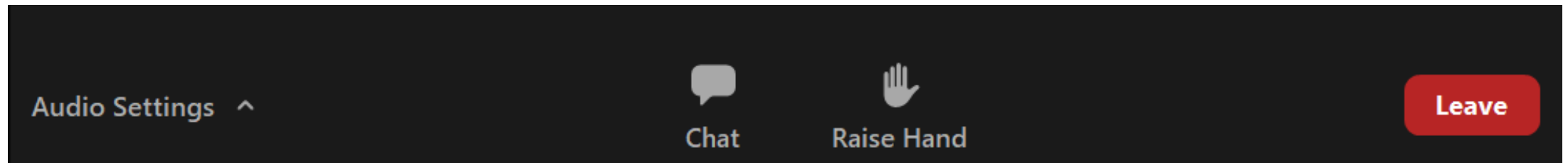


Nancy Thai,
Community
engagement –
forum support, PRR

Facilitator and support

Zoom overview

- ✓ Raise your hand
- ✓ Chat with panelists
- ✓ Technical issues? Email nthai@prrbiz.com



Tonight's objectives

- Seek input to narrow down the alternatives for further evaluation
- Answer stakeholder questions
- Share next steps

Agenda

1. Review stakeholder feedback from the first forum
2. Share alternatives
3. Break
4. Share alternatives continued
5. Evaluation process
6. Timeline and next steps

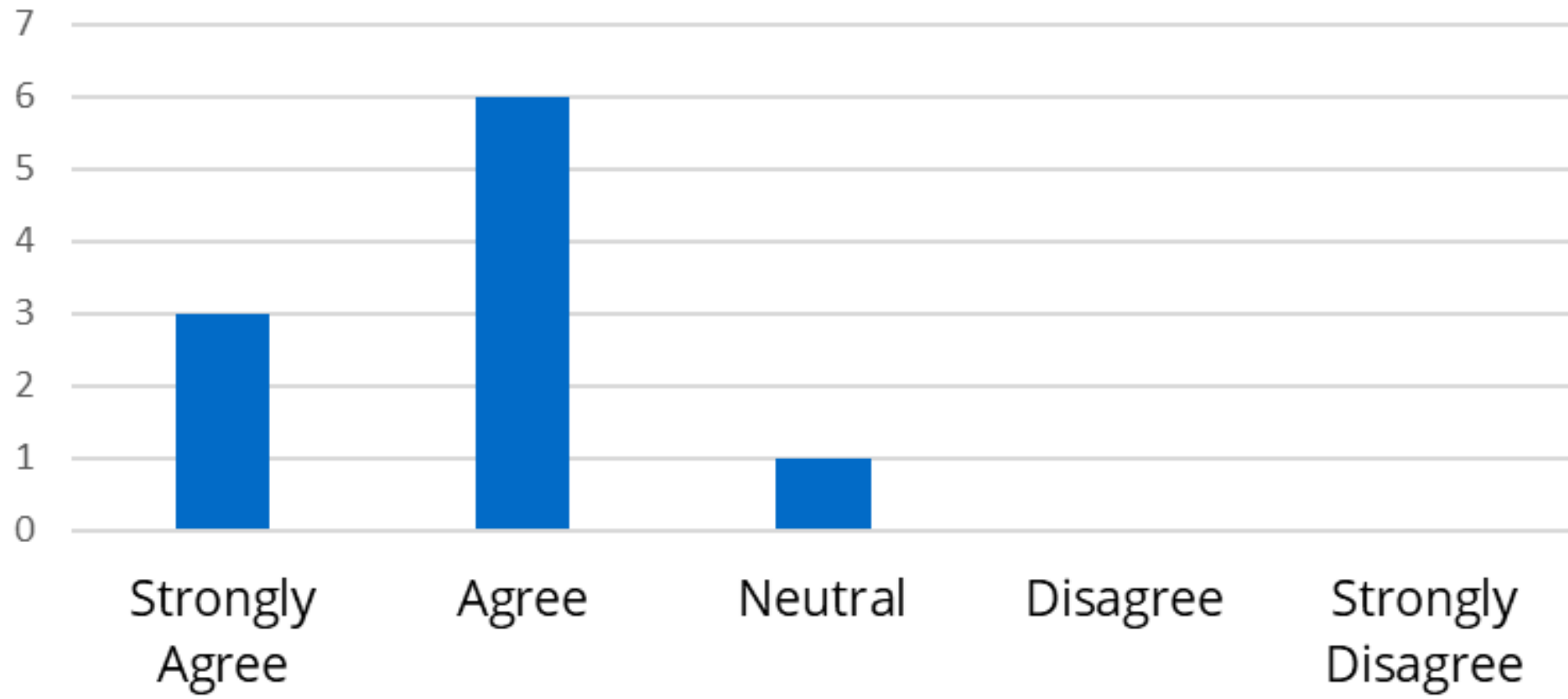
Stakeholder forum #1 feedback

Stakeholder forum #1 recap

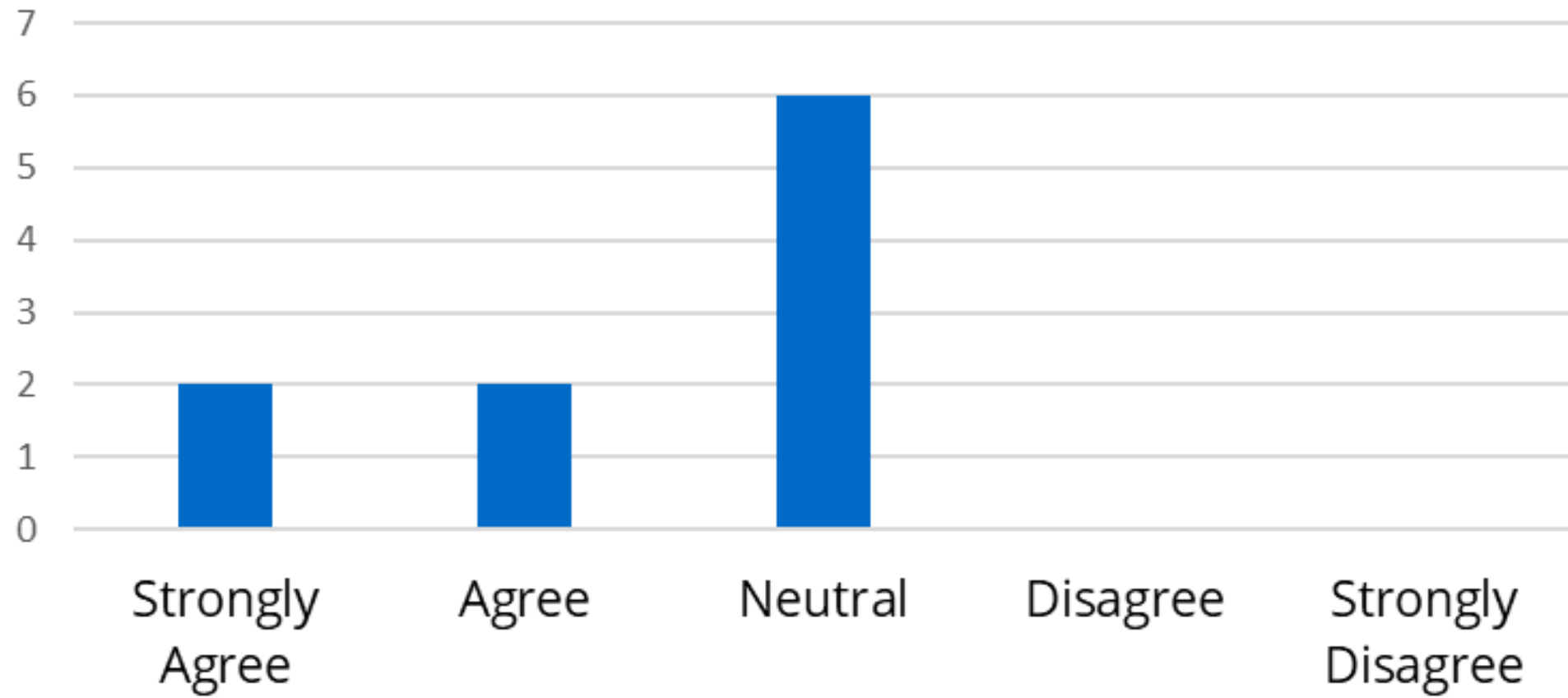
- Purpose of and need for the project
- Guiding principles and alternative evaluation criteria
- Community and stakeholder engagement process
- Project timeline
- Question and answer opportunity
- Next steps

29 stakeholder meeting attendees and 10 survey respondents

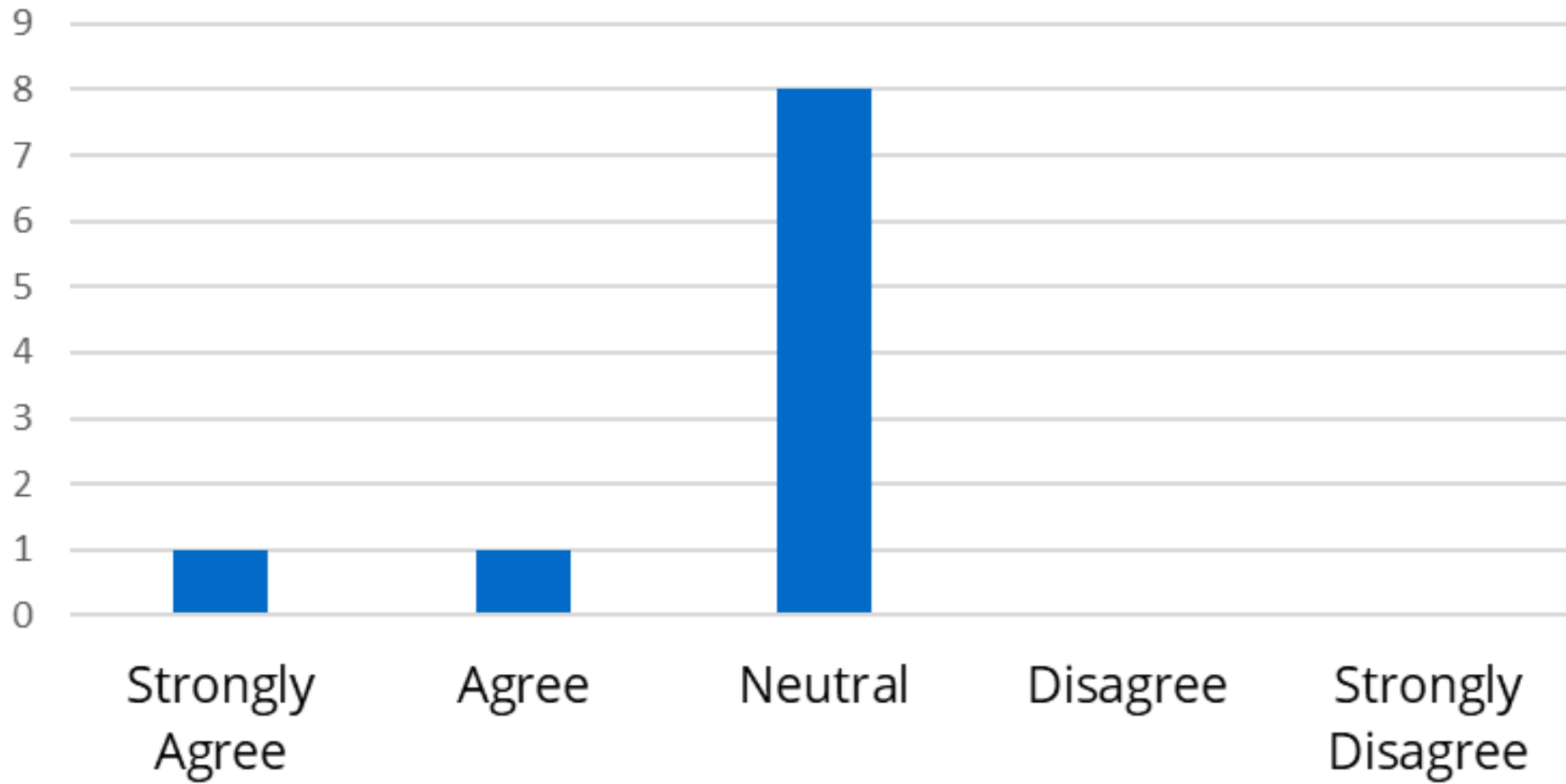
The purpose and need for the study are clearly defined.



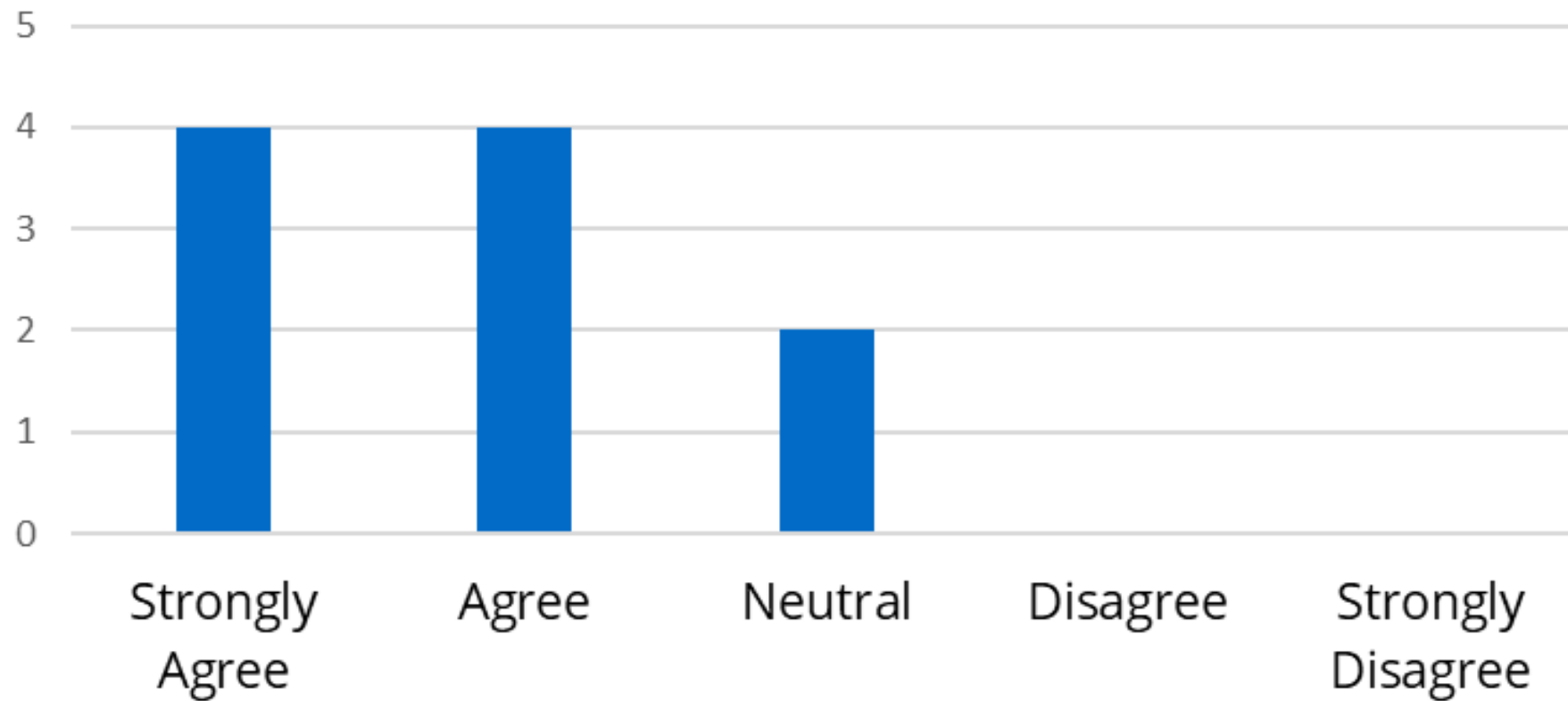
The decision making process is clearly defined.



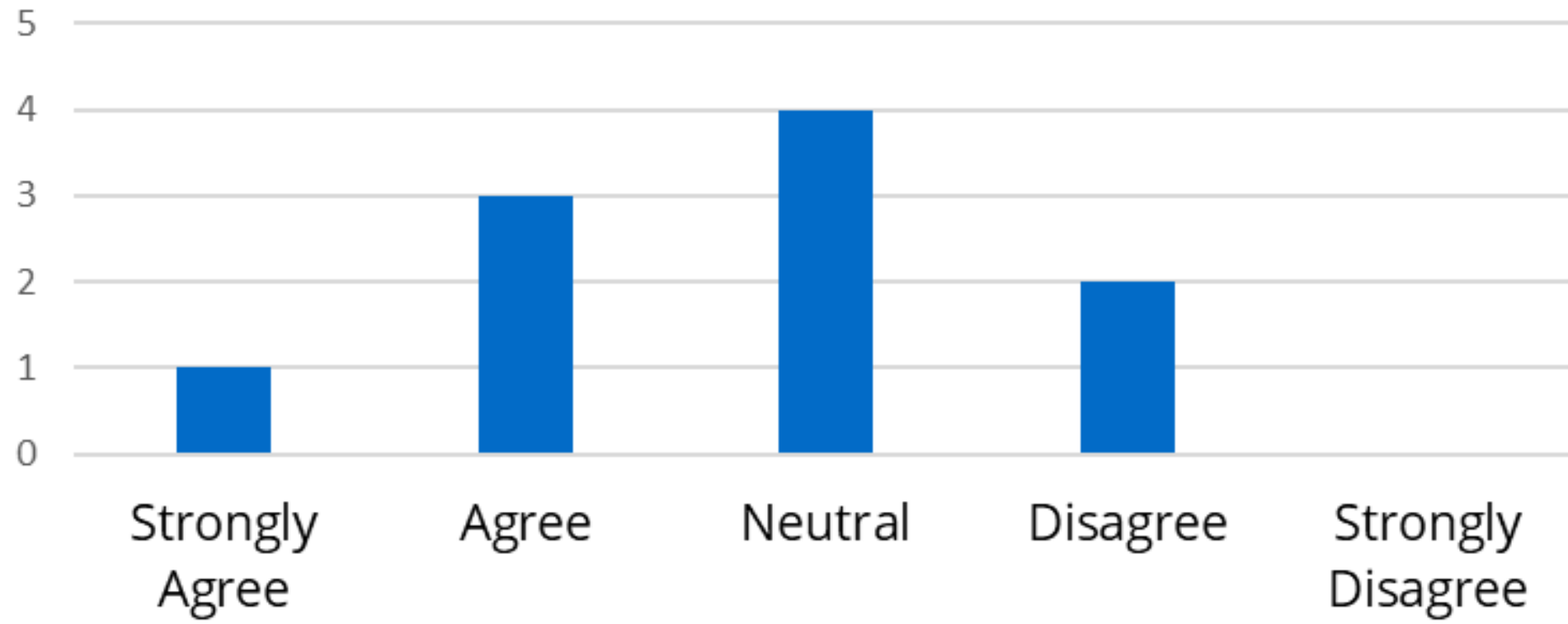
The methods for evaluating alternatives are clearly defined.



The ways to share input during and after the stakeholder forum were clearly described.



I am confident the city will consider the needs of all stakeholders in the study process.



Additional feedback

How would a new I-405 interchange in south downtown Bellevue benefit or impact your organization or the stakeholders you represent?

- It would improve or worsen congestion
- Concerns about neighborhood traffic and safety
- Concerned about blocking 114th Avenue access

Do you have any additional questions or comments about the study or first stakeholder forum?

- Want to know what alternatives are being considered
- Concerned with preserving access to 114th Avenue

Alternative concepts

Alternatives considered

- Twelve options
- Possible locations between NE Second Street and SE Eighth Street

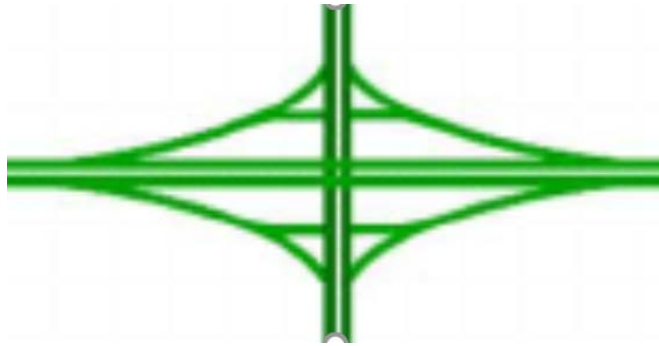


“Fatal flaw” screening criteria

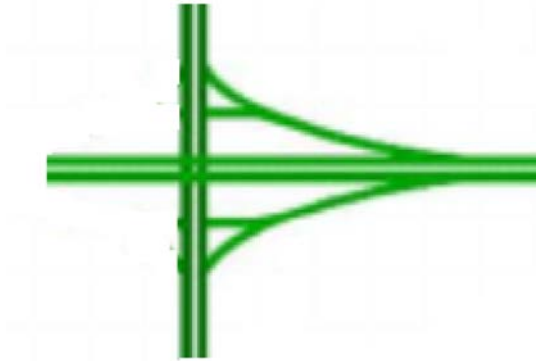
- Consistency with City of Bellevue’s plans and policies
- Consistency with federal and state policies, including I-405 Master Plan
- Constructability

Interchange concepts

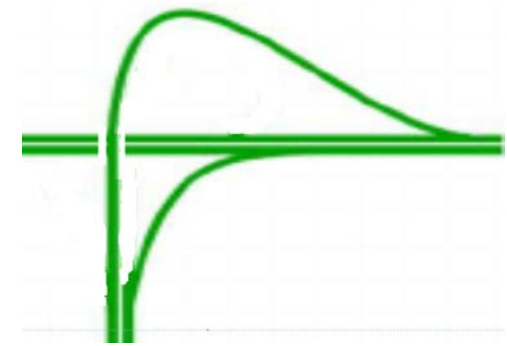
Diamond



Half Diamond



Overpass/Flyover



Alternatives dropped

- Half diamond at NE Second Street with extension east
- Half diamond at Main Street
- Extend NE Second Street with westbound to southbound on-ramp
- SE Fifth Street overcrossing to 116th Avenue NE with southbound on-ramp
- Southbound ramp to Express Toll Lane and braided ramp outside of SE Eighth Street

Remaining seven alternative concepts

Baseline (No Action)



NE Second Street/NE Fourth Street one-way couplet



Southbound on-ramp and northbound overpass at NE Second Street without extension



NE Second Street extension to Wilburton



Remaining seven alternative concepts

Express toll lane access to/from south at SE Sixth Street



SE Sixth Street overpass to 116th Avenue NE with southbound on-ramp

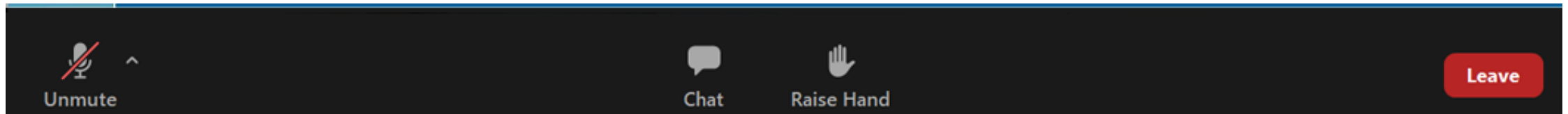
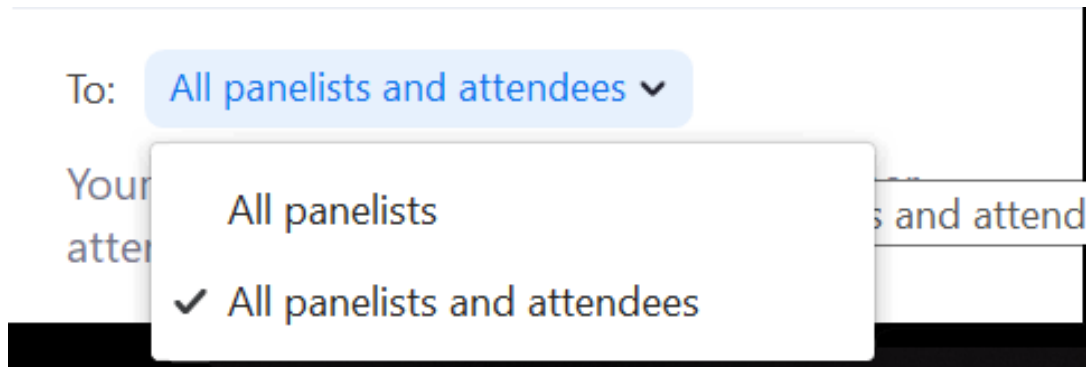


Lake Hills Connector southbound on-ramp



We want to hear from you

- Tools to gather initial feedback
 - Ask questions, chat, raise your hand, polls, questionnaire



Baseline (No Action)

Advantages:

- No construction cost or impact

Disadvantages:

- No new access to support growth



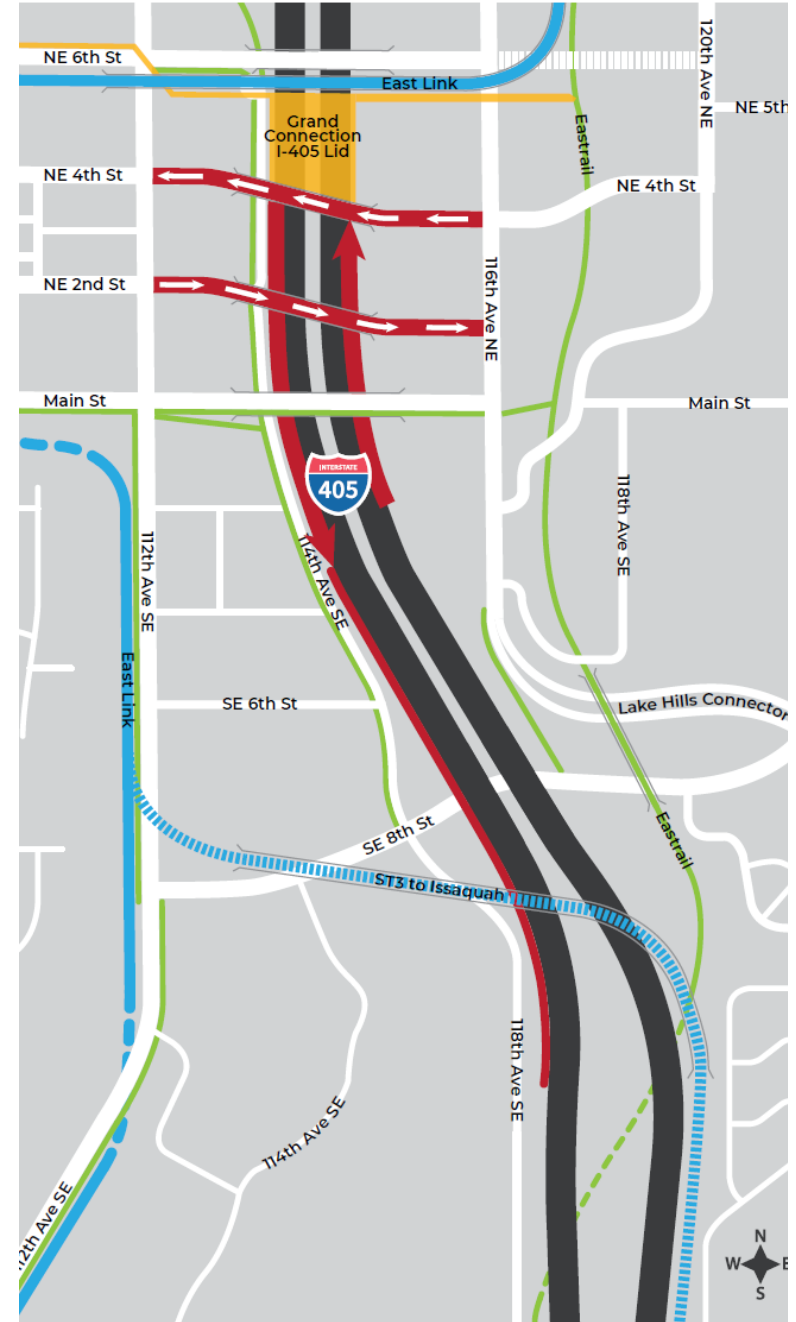
NE Second Street/NE Fourth Street One Way Couplet

Advantages:

- Provides access from NE Second Street with less impact to 114th Avenue
- Helps reduce congestion on NE Fourth Street bridge

Disadvantages:

- May not add significant capacity



Southbound on-ramp and northbound overpass at NE Second Street

Advantages:

- Provides additional access to I-405 from downtown

Disadvantages:

- No new downtown - Wilburton connection
- Flawed if 114th Avenue is displaced



Break

NE Second Street extension to Wilburton

Advantages:

- New downtown – Wilburton connection

Disadvantages:

- No new access to/from I-405



Express toll lane access to/from south at SE Sixth Street

Advantages:

- Provides additional east-west connection and access to I-405

Disadvantages:

- Does not fit well with the East Main transit-oriented development character/urban design
- Farther away from downtown



SE Sixth Street overpass to 116th Avenue NE with southbound on-ramp

Advantages:

- Provides additional east-west connection and access to I-405

Disadvantages:

- Does not fit well with the East Main transit-oriented development character/urban design
- Farther away from downtown



Lake Hills Connector southbound on-ramp (close westbound to southbound on- ramp at NE Fourth Street)

Advantages:

- Provides I-405 southbound access from Wilburton

Disadvantages:

- No new downtown - Wilburton connection
- No new access from downtown



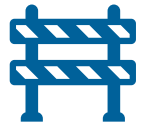
Next steps

Tier 2 – Alternatives evaluation

Evaluation criteria



Travel time



Missing links,
barriers, or
conflict points



Impact on
property
development



Align with
adopted plans
& urban design
policies



Cost

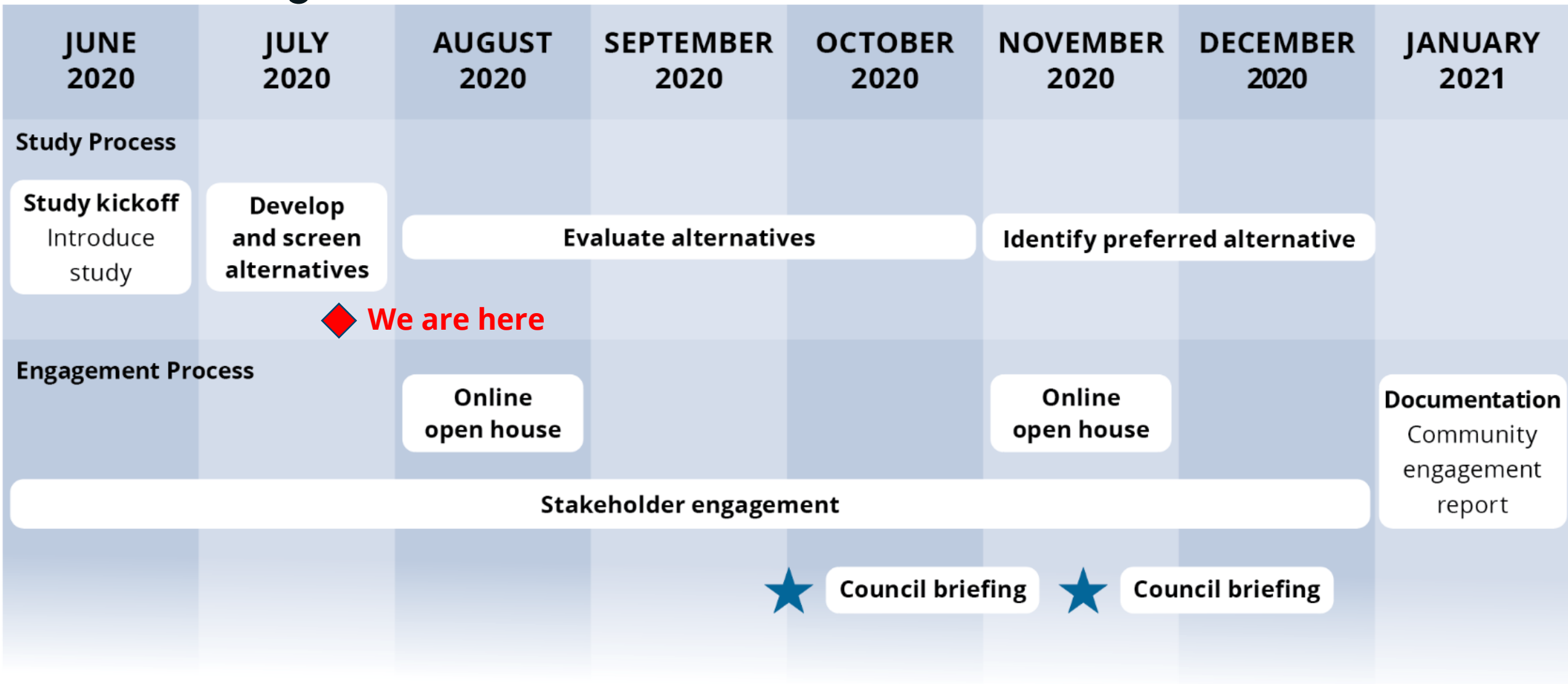


Stakeholder
Input



Public input

Study timeline



Upcoming events

- Next stakeholder forum: August 27 6-8 p.m.
- Online open house: August 3-21 at **engagingbellevue.com**
- City Council meeting: September 28
- For more information, visit <https://bellevuewa.gov> and search “Access study”

We want to hear from you

- Please take our follow-up questionnaire
- **Questions or comments?** Contact Shuming Yan at (425) 452-7858 or SYan@bellevuewa.gov

Thank you!



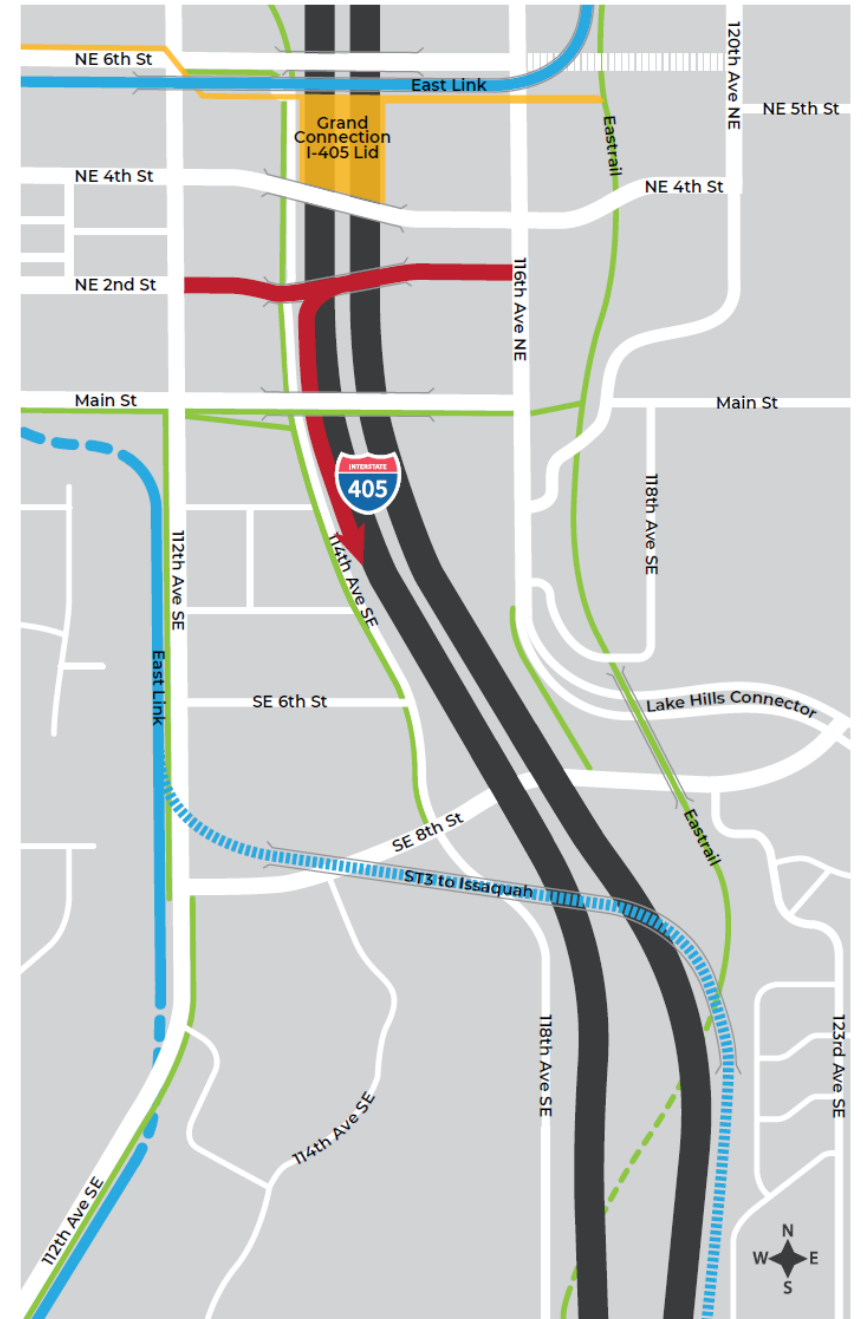
Appendix B: Dropped study alternatives

Alternatives dropped

Alternatives dropped

Extend NE Second Street with westbound to southbound on-ramp (close westbound to southbound on-ramp at NE Fourth Street)

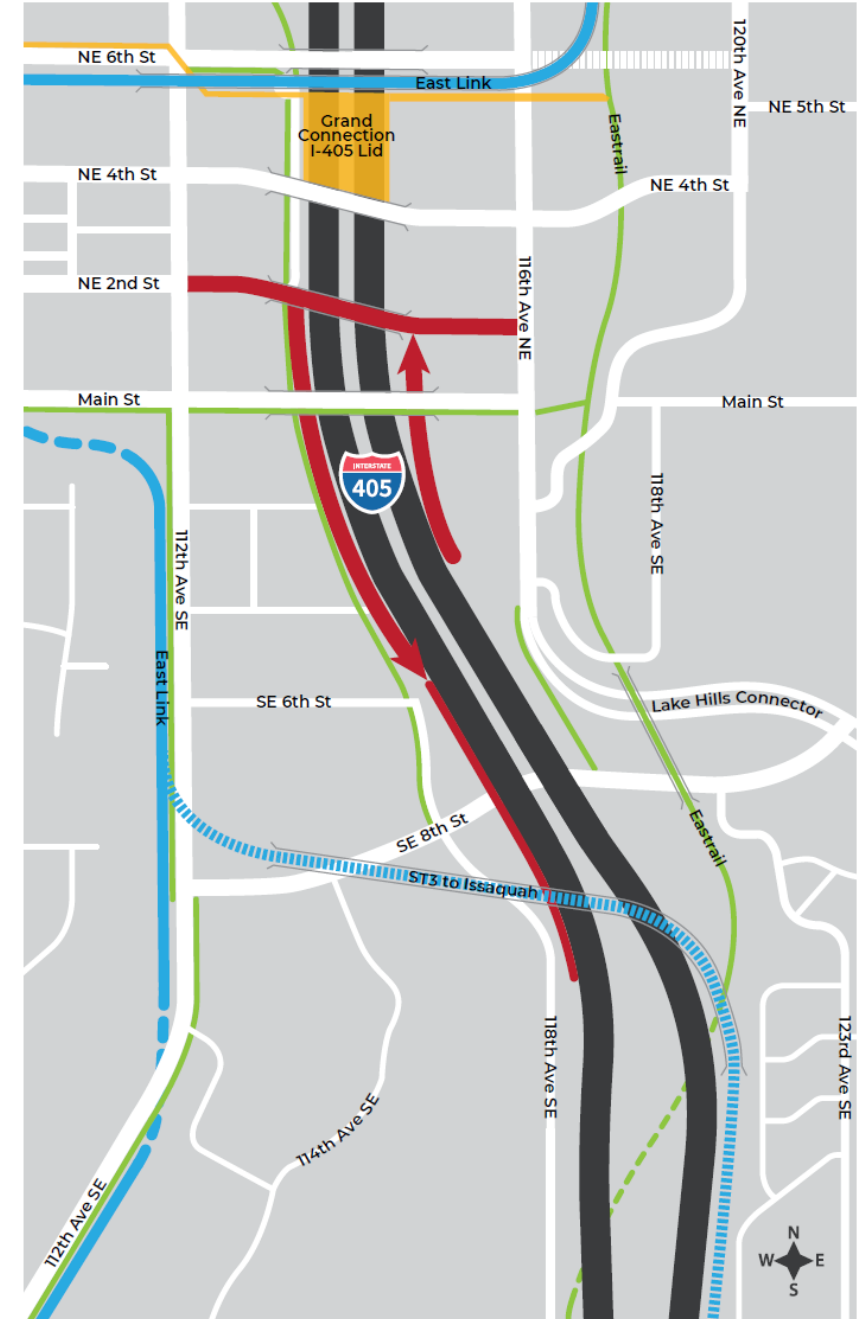
- Would require steep grade and extensive structures



Alternatives dropped

Half diamond at NE Second Street with extension to 116th Avenue NE

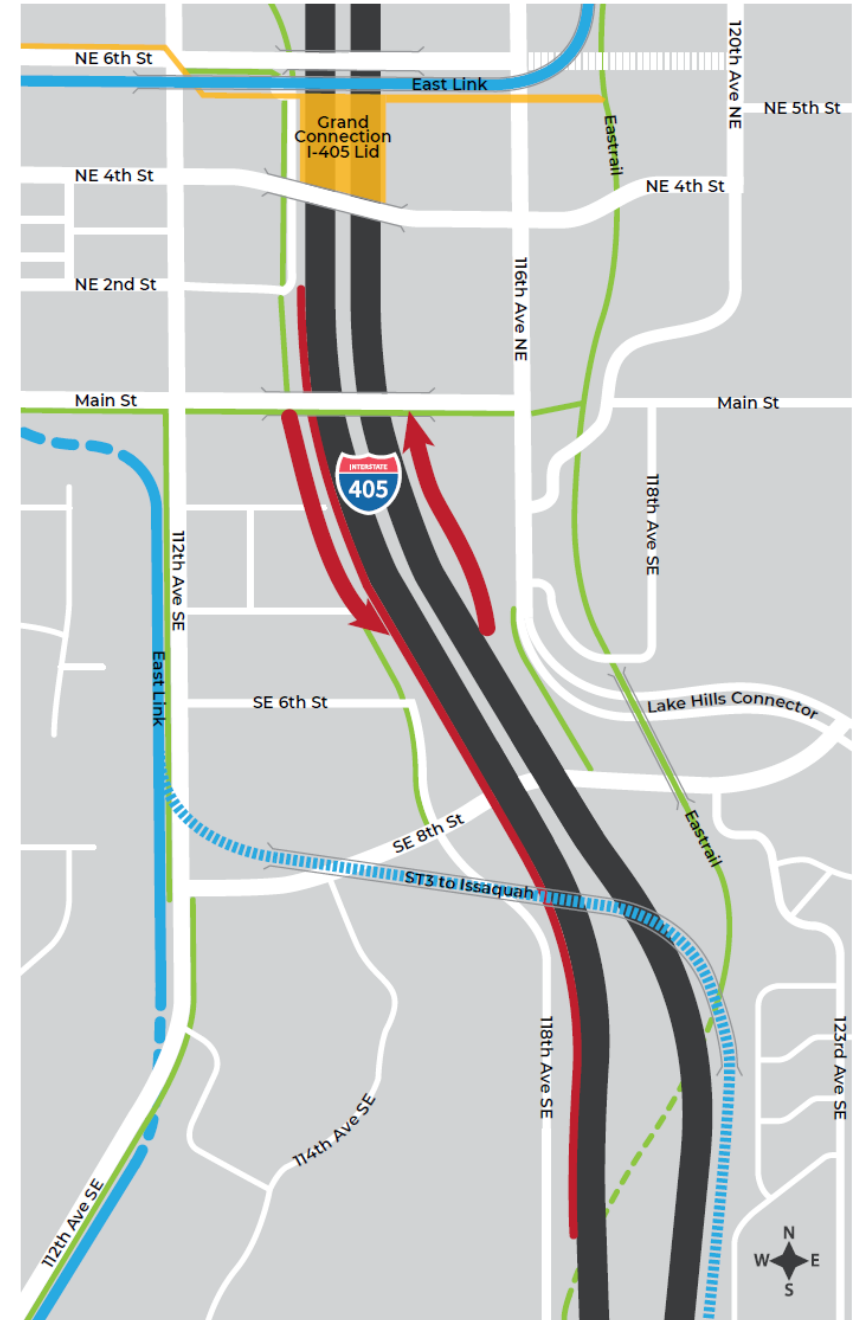
- Not compatible with new Main Street bridge
- Displaces access to 114th Avenue



Alternatives dropped

Half diamond with on- and off- ramps at Main Street

- Inconsistent with city plans and urban design
- Decreased accessibility to East Main Station
- Increased vehicle and pedestrian/bicycle conflict on Lake to Lake Trail



Alternatives dropped

SE Fifth Street Overcrossing to 116th Avenue NE with southbound on-ramp

- Inconsistent with city's plan and policies
- Inconsistent with East Main transit-oriented development plan and urban design
- Barrier for people walking to East Main Station from nearby homes and businesses



Alternatives dropped

Southbound ramp to Express Toll Lane and braided ramp to outside of SE Eighth Street

- Would require building extensive structures

