



LIGHT RAIL PERMITTING CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ADVISORY DOCUMENT - RECOMMENDATION TO THE DIRECTOR - SOUTH BELLEVUE SEGMENT DESIGN AND MITIGATION PERMIT July 2, 2015

Introduction

The Light Rail Permitting Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) was appointed by the Bellevue City Council consistent with the terms of the Light Rail Overlay regulations contained in the city's Land Use Code (LUC). Land Use Code section 20.25M.035.A describes the CAC purpose to:

1. **Dedicate the time necessary to represent community, neighborhood and citywide interests in the permit review process***; and
2. Ensure that issues of importance are surfaced early in the permit review process while there is still time to address design issues while minimizing cost implications; and
3. **Consider the communities and land uses through which the RLRT (Regional Light Rail Train) System or Facility passes, and set "the context" for the regional transit authority to respond to as facility design progresses***; and
4. **Help guide RLRT System and Facility design to ensure that neighborhood objectives are considered and design is context sensitive by engaging in on-going dialogue with the regional transit authority and the City, and by monitoring follow-through***; and
5. Provide a venue for receipt of public comment on the proposed RLRT Facilities and their consistency with the policy and regulatory guidance of paragraph 20.25M.035.E below and Sections 20.25M.040 and 20.25M.050 of this Part; and
6. **Build the public's sense of ownership in the project***; and
7. **Ensure CAC participation is streamlined and effectively integrated into the permit review process to avoid delays in project delivery*.**

* Identifies the focus of this Advisory Document

Design and Mitigation Permit Review — 60% Design Development Phase

This phase of review is intended to provide feedback regarding effectiveness of design and landscape development in incorporating prior guidance at context and schematic design stages. This phase is intended to provide further input and guidance, based on the input and guidance

provided in the context setting phase, on compliance (or lack of compliance) with the policy and regulatory guidance of LUC 20.25M and LUC 20.25M.040 and 20.25M.050, and whether information is sufficient to evaluate such compliance. The CAC advice is based on the alignment and station design agreed to by the City of Bellevue City Council and Sound Transit Board through a Memorandum of Understanding. The CAC is charged with providing the Director of the Development Services Department with a final advisory document.

CAC Work Product

The work of the CAC at each review stage will culminate in a CAC advisory document that describes the phase of review and CAC feedback. The work product required following the Pre-Development Phase of CAC review is intended to provide Sound Transit with early guidance and advice that is integrated into future Design and Mitigation Permit submittals. This final Design and Mitigation Permit advisory document is intended to provide the Director of the Development Services Department with a recommendation to demonstrate Sound Transit compliance with Design and Mitigation Permit Decision Criteria pursuant to LUC 20.25M.030.C.3.

On May 13, 2014, Sound Transit was provided with the South Bellevue Segment Pre-Development Advisory Document. That document outlined Sound Transit compliance with context setting characteristics and early Design and Mitigation Permit requirements. The pre-development advisory document also included several recommendations on additional items to be addressed during formal permit review.

The following represents the CAC advisory recommendation to the Development Services Department Director regarding compliance related to LUC 20.25M.030.C.3, LUC 20.25M.040, and 20.25M.050.

20.25M.030.C.3 Design and Mitigation Permit Decision Criteria

The City of Bellevue Development Services Director is responsible insuring compliance with all Design and Mitigation Permit decision criteria as outlined below. The CAC was tasked with review and recommendation on some, but not all, decision criteria. Those criteria not discussed by the CAC are still applicable to approval of the Design and Mitigation Permit and compliance with all decision criteria will need to be demonstrated in the Director's decision.

A proposal for a RLRT system or facility may be approved or approved with conditions; provided, that such proposal satisfies the following criteria:

a. The applicant has demonstrated compliance with the CAC Review requirements of LUC 20.25M.035; and

- Sound Transit has demonstrated compliance with CAC review requirements by attending and presenting materials regarding the East Link Light Rail System and Facilities at CAC meetings held the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month. In addition to the regularly

scheduled meetings Sound Transit and City staff provided tours of the existing Central Link Light Rail System and Facilities and proposed East Link route in the City of Bellevue including the South Bellevue Segment.

b. The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan including without limitation the Light Rail Best Practices referenced in Comprehensive Plan Policy TR-75.2 and the policies set forth in LUC 20.25M.010.B.7; and

The CAC was not asked to do an exhaustive review of consistency with the Comprehensive Plan policies and Light Rail Best Practices. Where CAC members felt that elements of the permit were not consistent with these policies, they have recommended modifications to the permit in areas that were identified within their scope. Some CAC members expressed concern that some elements of the project that are outside of their scope were inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Light Rail Best Practices. The East Link Project shall demonstrate consistency with the numerous Comprehensive Plan Policies that are applicable to light rail (LU-9, LU-22, LU-24, ED-3, TR-75.1, TR-75.2, TR-75.5, TR-75.7, TR75.8, TR-75.9, TR-75.12, TR-75.15, TR-75.17, TR-75.18, TR-75.20, TR-75.22, TR-75.23, TR75.27, TR-75.28, TR-75.32, TR-75.33, TR-75.34, TR-75.35, TR-118 and UT-39) and Light Rail Best Practices. This proposal shall be consistent with Light Rail Best Practices which focus on community and neighborhoods, community involvement, connecting people to light rail, land use, street and operations, system elements (elevated, at-grade, and tunnel), property values, station security, and construction impacts and mitigation. A detailed description of project compliance will be included in the issued Design and Mitigation Permit. The CAC's recommendations advocate for the City's long-term transportation and land use objectives while minimizing environmental and neighborhood impacts, balancing regional system performance.

LU-9 Maintain compatible use and design with surrounding built environment when considering new development or redevelopment within and already developed area.

Recommendation: Provide sound walls more compatible with surrounding built environment. Walls should be finished with materials consistent with the adjacent uses such as stone, brick, or wood veneers. Security and safety fences should be designed to meet the City's codes. These fences should be designed to minimize blocked views and maintain the context of a city in a park. Landscape buffers should be provided throughout this segment between the edge of Bellevue Way/112th Ave and the tracks. Include elements such as living walls and green roofs to help mitigate for the height and scale of the walls, guideway, and station facility.

ED-3 Maintain regulations that allow for continued economic growth while respecting local neighborhoods and surrounding communities.

Recommendation: As part of any construction mitigation plan, the city shall provide opportunities for public involvement through its public outreach program.

TR-75.9 Advocate for an alignment south of downtown Bellevue that advances the adopted land use vision by: 1. Protecting the character and livability of existing

neighborhoods, including adequate ingress and egress to the neighborhood; 2. Minimizing impacts to wetland and other natural resources; 3. Providing local access to the system for Bellevue neighborhoods; and 4. Optimizing ridership and user convenience.

Recommendation: Ensure that all impacts have been sufficiently identified, avoided where possible and exceptionally mitigated.

TR-75.34-Develop and implement an early and ongoing program with the regional transit provider to provide assistance to residents and businesses affected by construction.

Recommendation: Prior to construction, the CAC recommends that Sound Transit offer “Residential Sound Packages” for the frontline homes along Bellevue Way and 112th where noise walls will have no impact or construction sequencing prevents the early installation of the noise walls. Frontline properties are identified on the attached sketch.

LIGHT RAIL BEST PRACTICES

Key provisions of the Light Rail Best Practices report are included below where the CAC’s recommendations and input are needed to ensure compliance or provide additional clarity.

- 1) Guiding Principle 2. Light rail should be developed in a manner that complements, not diminishes, the character and quality of Bellevue.
Light rail systems should be planned, designed, and built to fit appropriately into the local context and provide community enhancements, without shifting the community character. East Link should be designed to improve the places in Bellevue through context-sensitive design, high quality materials, and innovative urban design approaches that can protect neighborhoods and property values and provide a safe and secure environment for transit riders and neighbors.
- 2) Guiding Principle 3. Anticipate impacts and advocate for exceptional mitigation.
Light rail will reinforce Bellevue’s role in the region as the population, economic, and cultural center of the Eastside. However, the benefits of the system cannot be achieved without some short-term disruption and inconvenience during construction and without making some long-term changes to the existing environment. Proven techniques to avoid, minimize, and mitigate these impacts can be employed to make the short term impacts manageable. The City should expect and advocate for exceptional mitigation throughout the project phases and seek to leverage additional local investments through light rail development.
- 3) Guiding Principle 4. Alignment profile should consider the unique qualities of each part of the community. There is not a one-size-fits-all solution for alignment profiles – at-grade, elevated, and tunnel – in Bellevue. There are trade-offs when selecting profiles for each of the three areas (south of downtown, downtown, and Bel-Red) in Bellevue. The profile should advance the land use vision for each of the areas it travels through, conveniently connect destinations, optimize ridership, and minimize impacts
- 4) Guiding Principle 5. An early, ongoing public involvement program is essential for success in Bellevue. An early, ongoing, and comprehensive program to engage stakeholders is

absolutely essential to the success of light rail in Bellevue. Providing transparency about project information and decisions will increase public understanding of and comfort with the project. Engaging the community in the design of the system, particularly stations, will result in more sensitive designs and build the public's sense of ownership. Transparently sharing information and engaging the community in a meaningful two-way, ongoing planning process will increase the success of the system. As planning for East Link is currently underway, the City and Sound Transit should begin immediately to identify the next phase of the public involvement program for the East Link project.

c. The proposal complies with the applicable requirements of this Light Rail Overlay District; and

- As it will be conditioned, this application for Design and Mitigation Permit will be in compliance with all elements of the Light Rail Overlay District including RLRT system and facilities development standards. Approval of an Alternative Landscape Option and Noise Monitoring and Contingency Plan will be included as conditions of approval. The CAC has made recommendations to insure compliance with context requirements of the Light Rail Overlay District such as station materials, design intent, landscaping, garage design, and the application of art,

d. The proposal addresses all applicable design guidelines and development standards of this Light Rail Overlay District in a manner which fulfills their purpose and intent; and

- The CAC reviewed and discussed the applicable design and development standards of the Light Rail Overlay District and has made recommendations intended to insure design guidelines and standards are met. Specific CAC advice is discussed below in this document.

e. The proposal is compatible with and responds to the existing or intended character, appearance, quality of development and physical characteristics of the subject property and immediate vicinity; and

- The South Bellevue Segment of East Link must comply with all applicable zoning and context requirements. Recommendations from the CAC to better integrate and soften the look and impact of the station and garage located at the South Bellevue Station are responsive to the existing and intended character of this segment. Light Rail Overlay (LUC 20.25M) development standards, including the establishment of the RLRT Transition Area also respond to the character within this segment.

f. The proposal will be served by adequate public facilities including streets, fire protection, and utilities; and

- The CAC was not tasked with verifying adequate public services. It is anticipated that when the light rail system is operational anticipated impacts to public facilities including streets, fire protection, and utilities will have been mitigated.

g. The proposal complies with the applicable requirements of the Bellevue City Code, including without limitation those referenced in LUC 20.25M.010.B.8; and

- Development, construction and operation of the RLRT system and facilities must comply with applicable Bellevue City Codes, including the noise control code and environmental procedures

code. Technical analysis of Sound Transit submitted Noise Studies and documents will be completed by city staff and technical consultants. Any additional noise mitigation resulting from technical review will be included as a condition of approval the Design and Mitigation Permit. The CAC has offered advice regarding the type of sound walls used and sound wall materials. Some CAC members have expressed concern that the scope of work provided to the CAC has limited their input on the location, type, and height of noise barriers.

h. The proposal is consistent with any development agreement or Conditional Use Permit approved pursuant to subsection B of this section; and

- The CAC was not tasked with verifying consistency with the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the City of Bellevue and the Sound Transit Board. Plan development through the final design stage will result in expected refinements to design that is typical to any major development. Significant design changes in plan design that are within the scope of work for the CAC will be brought back to the CAC for evaluation during construction permit review.

i. The proposal provides mitigation sufficient to eliminate or minimize long-term impacts to properties located near the RLRT facility or system, and sufficient to comply with all mitigation requirements of the Bellevue City Code and other applicable state or federal laws.

- To the greatest extent possible with the chosen alignment and station design, the proposed RLRT facility and system will avoid, minimize, and mitigate anticipated long-term impacts to properties located near the light rail system and facilities. Mitigation includes, but is not limited to, enhanced landscaping, critical area planting enhancements, permanent noise walls, sound absorbing panels on the guideway, and the installation of public art. Some CAC members have expressed significant concerns related to long term related construction impacts to traffic and noise levels along Bellevue Way, 112th Ave SE, at the South Bellevue Station, and within adjacent residential neighborhoods.

j. When the proposed RLRT facility will be located, in whole or in part, in a critical area regulated by Part 20.25H LUC, a separate Critical Areas Land Use Permit shall not be required, but such facility shall satisfy the following additional criteria:

- i. The proposal utilizes to the maximum extent possible the best available construction, design and development techniques which result in the least impact on the critical area and critical area buffer; and
- ii. The proposal incorporates the performance standards of Part 20.25H LUC to the maximum extent applicable; and
- iii. The proposal includes a mitigation or restoration plan consistent with the requirements of LUC 20.25H.210; except that a proposal to modify or remove vegetation pursuant to an approved Vegetation Management Plan under LUC 20.25H.055.C.3.i shall not require a mitigation or restoration plan.

- Mitigation and restoration requirements per LUC 20.25H due to impacts to critical areas and their buffers will be incorporated into the Design and Mitigation Permit approval and have been discussed at CAC meetings. Impacts to critical areas in the South Bellevue Segment include temporary and permanent impacts to wetlands and their buffers, temporary and permanent impacts to streams and their buffers, and impacts to habitat for species of local importance. Mitigation for impacts to critical areas and their buffer per the criteria located in LUC 20.25H will occur in the South Bellevue Segment within Mercer Slough Nature Park as well as a site located in the Bel Red Segment. Mitigation is required to result in a condition that is equal to or superior to the pre-existing environment. Based on staff's review of the technical reports and mitigation proposed by Sound Transit, the proposed mitigation will provide a lift in critical areas function at maturity over the existing condition.

CAC Recommendation to the Director of Development Services

At the request of the CAC, CAC Pre-Development Phase advice that has been addressed or partially addressed in the Design and Mitigation Permit submittal are included in bold for the Director's reference.

20.25M.040 RLRT system and facilities development standards

1. Building Height

- The CAC recommends that Sound Transit incorporate a living wall, green roof, or other green vegetation treatment on the garage/station as mitigation for Sound Transit's request for additional building height.

2. Landscape Development

- The CAC recommends the inclusion of a living wall, green roof, or planter boxes with hanging vegetation be installed on the upper levels of the north, south, and west sides of the garage to help soften the edges of the structure as well as communicate the idea of a grand entry into Bellevue. The addition of paint that complements any living vegetation treatment is also recommended by the CAC.
- The CAC recommends that additional landscaping options to help screen exposed noise walls should be included in the landscape plans. This should include a climbing vegetation option where there is limited space for additional landscaping.
- The CAC recommends that Sound Transit include additional appropriate landscaping to screen the guideway.
- The CAC recommends that more mature vegetation be incorporated into the design of the light rail corridor. This can be achieved by planting some large specimen trees at the point where the trains enter the South Bellevue Station (meadow), on the east side of the Y of Bellevue Way and 112th Ave SE, and in the median in 112th Ave SE.
- The CAC recommends the installation of landscaping around the light poles on the roof deck of the parking garage.

3. Fencing

- Security and safety fences should be designed to meet City's codes. These fences should be designed to minimize blocked views to maintain the idea of a city in a park.

4. Light and Glare

- The CAC recommends light standards on the deck of the South Bellevue Station Garage are as low as feasible to avoid light pollution into the neighborhoods in the vicinity. **(In order to prevent light spillover or trespass Sound Transit is using LED lights for their poles that are designed with technology to reduce backlight and to focus light in a fixed area on the surface of the garage).**

5. Recycling and Solid Waste

- The CAC recommends that Sound Transit work with its sustainability group to evaluate a system wide compost collection bin option at its stations.

6. Critical Areas

- The CAC recommends that Sound Transit work collaboratively with the City of Bellevue to develop public information sign(s) at the South Bellevue Station that would inform transit users and visitors of wildlife and habitat within Mercer Slough Nature Park.
- The CAC recommends that Sound Transit adhere to all best management practices and complies with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations related to wildlife including but not limited to migratory birds.

7. Use of City Right of Way

- The CAC acknowledges that specific details regarding the use of the City ROW will be handled through the review and issuance of Right of Way Use Permits per LUC 20.25M.040.J; however, they want to emphasize the importance of limiting impacts on traffic to the best level technically feasible.

20.25M.050 Design guidelines

1. **Design Intent-** In addition to complying with all applicable provisions of the Southwest Bellevue Subarea Plan, the design intent for the Regional Light Rail Train system and facility segment that passes through this subarea is to contribute to the major City gateway feature that already helps define Bellevue Way and the 112th Corridor. The Regional Light Rail Train system or facility design should reflect the tree-lined boulevard that is envisioned for the subarea, and where there are space constraints within the transportation cross-section, design features such as living walls and concrete surface treatments should be employed to achieve corridor continuity. The presence of the South Bellevue park and ride and station when viewed from the neighborhood above and Bellevue Way to the west, as well as from park trails to the east, should be softened

through tree retention where possible and enhanced landscaping and "greening features" such as living walls and trellises.

2. **Context and Design Considerations** - The CAC was tasked with evaluating the existing context setting characteristics included in the Land Use Code in order to verify that the design of the station and alignment is consistent with the vision for the Southwest Bellevue Subarea. The Land Use Code states that the character of this area is defined by:

- The expansive Mercer Slough Nature Park;
- Historic references to truck farming of strawberries and blueberries;
- Retained and enhanced tree and landscaped areas that complement and screen transportation uses from residential and commercial development; and
- Unique, low density residential character that conveys the feeling of a small town within a larger City.

The CAC advised that the following additional context and design considerations should be considered when evaluating the East Link project in the Southwest Bellevue Subarea for context sensitivity during future CAC and permit review phases. The following items pertain to the South Bellevue Segment.

- The alignment transition from the 1-90 right-of-way to the South Bellevue Station should be reflected as a "Grand Entry" into Bellevue. This gateway area defines Bellevue as a "City in a Park." The gateway serves a number of functions, and should appropriately greet the different users that pass through it, including transit riders, vehicles, residents, bicyclists from the 1-90 trail, fish (specifically salmon), and wildlife.

The South Bellevue Park & Ride garage should incorporate green/living walls and trellis structures on the roof level in addition to interesting concrete surface treatments to break down mass and scale, and to help blend the garage into the Mercer Slough Nature Park when viewed from the neighborhoods to the west and the park to the east.

3. **Additional General Design Guidelines**

- The CAC recommends that more earth tones and color variety be incorporated into the proposed art treatments and other station and corridor elements. Earth tones means tans, browns, beige, rusts, reds and orange. **(Sound Transit has indicated that the artists for the station are evaluating options for additional color and earth tones in proposed art treatments.)**
- The CAC recommends less hard edges in the design of the South Bellevue Station. One suggestion would be to incorporate more organic shapes into the design to soften hard lines. **(Sound Transit has attempted to incorporate more organic shapes in the design using art treatments at both the station, parking garage, and guideway.)**

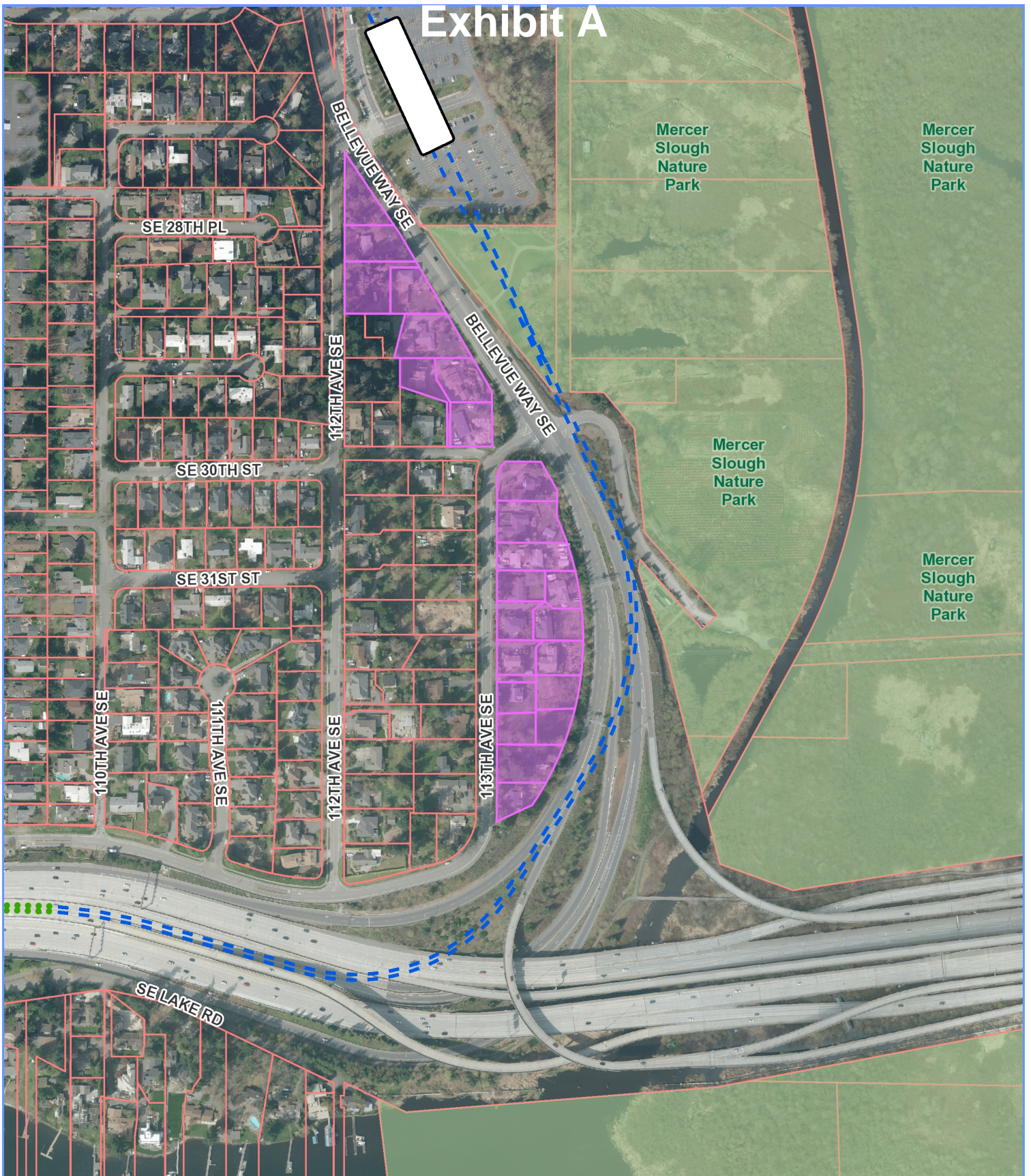
- The CAC recommends Sound Transit evaluate the possibility of using an artistic design for the mesh screening at the South Bellevue Station Garage. **(Sound Transit has proposed a green artistic treatment for the mesh screening on the garage. Final color combinations are still in development.)**
- The CAC recommends that Sound Transit extend the proposed art treatment on the guideway noise walls and additional colors be incorporated into the design. **(Sound Transit has shown an art treatment on a portion of the guideway noise walls that reflects CAC pre-advisory advice. The CAC has requested additional color variety which is under development. Sound Transit has also indicated that an extension of the art treatment is in preliminary design.)**
- The CAC recommends that Sound Transit use a stacked stone or brick type pattern with variegated earth tones for noise walls. Ashlar stone walls one recommendation from the CAC. The CAC also recommends evaluation of art opportunities to help buffer any negative visual impacts of areas of tall noise walls.
- The CAC recommends Sound Transit work with the City of Bellevue to install way finding kiosk(s) at the South Bellevue Station and as appropriate along the alignment to direct people to available resources and recreational opportunities within Mercer Slough Nature Park.
- The CAC recommends that Sound Transit use round catenary poles instead of H poles from the South Bellevue Station to the tunnel portal at the intersection of 112th Ave SE and Main Street.
- The CAC recommends that a small viewing platform be created on the top garage deck to allow for views into the Mercer Slough Nature Park.
- Prior to construction, the CAC recommends that Sound Transit offer “Residential Sound Packages” for the frontline homes along Bellevue Way SE and 112th Ave NE where noise walls are not planned, feasible, or effective, or where construction sequencing prevents the early installation of the noise walls. This should include the frontline homes at both street level and along the top of the hillside on Bellevue Way SE per attached Exhibit A.
- The CAC recommends that Sound Transit conduct additional noise analysis for impacts to users of Mercer Slough, as a sensitive receptor including the installation of sound panels on the east side of the guideway as noise mitigation for users of Mercer Slough.
- The CAC recommends that Surrey Downs Park be evaluated as a sensitive receptor.
- The CAC recommends that night noise impacts be thoroughly evaluated and monitored as a result of extended hours of train movements to and from the OMSF.
- The CAC recommends that noise impacts due to additional traffic to and from the South Bellevue Park and Ride (SBPR) on Bellevue Way be addressed.

- The CAC recommends that construction noise be analyzed and mitigated for the five year duration of construction staging activities at the SBPR and for the construction traffic and construction related noise due to night time work.
- The CAC recommends that variable seating heights be provided at all light rail stations in Bellevue.
- The CAC recommends that both audio and visual cues be included in station design.

Design and Mitigation Permit Approval

The recommendations contained in this Advisory Document represent the conclusion of the CAC review of the South Bellevue Segment Design and Mitigation Permit. The recommendations included in this document shall be incorporated into the Director's administrative decision. Departures by the Director from specific recommendations included within the CAC's Design and Mitigation Permit Advisory Document shall be limited to those instances where the Director determines that the departure is necessary to ensure that the RLRT facility or system is consistent with: (i) applicable policy and regulatory guidance contained in the Light Rail Overlay; (ii) authority granted to the CAC pursuant to this section; (iii) SEPA conditions or other regulatory requirements applicable to the RLRT system or facility; or (iv) state or federal law. Departures from the CAC Design and Mitigation Permit Advisory Document shall be addressed in the decision by the Director, and rationale for the departures shall be provided.

Exhibit A



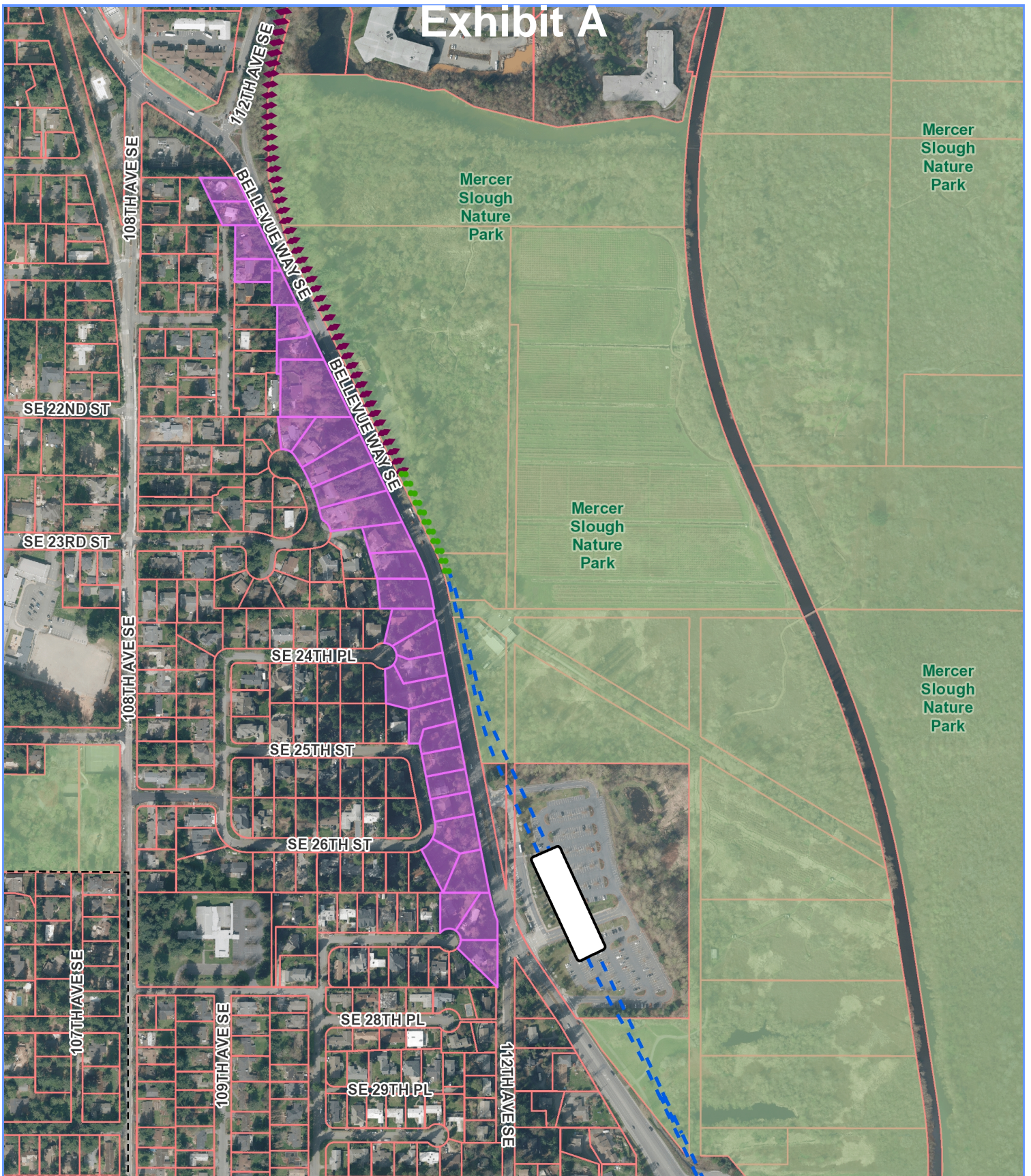
East Link Package Offers 1



0 184 368

Scale 1: 4,416 Feet

Exhibit A

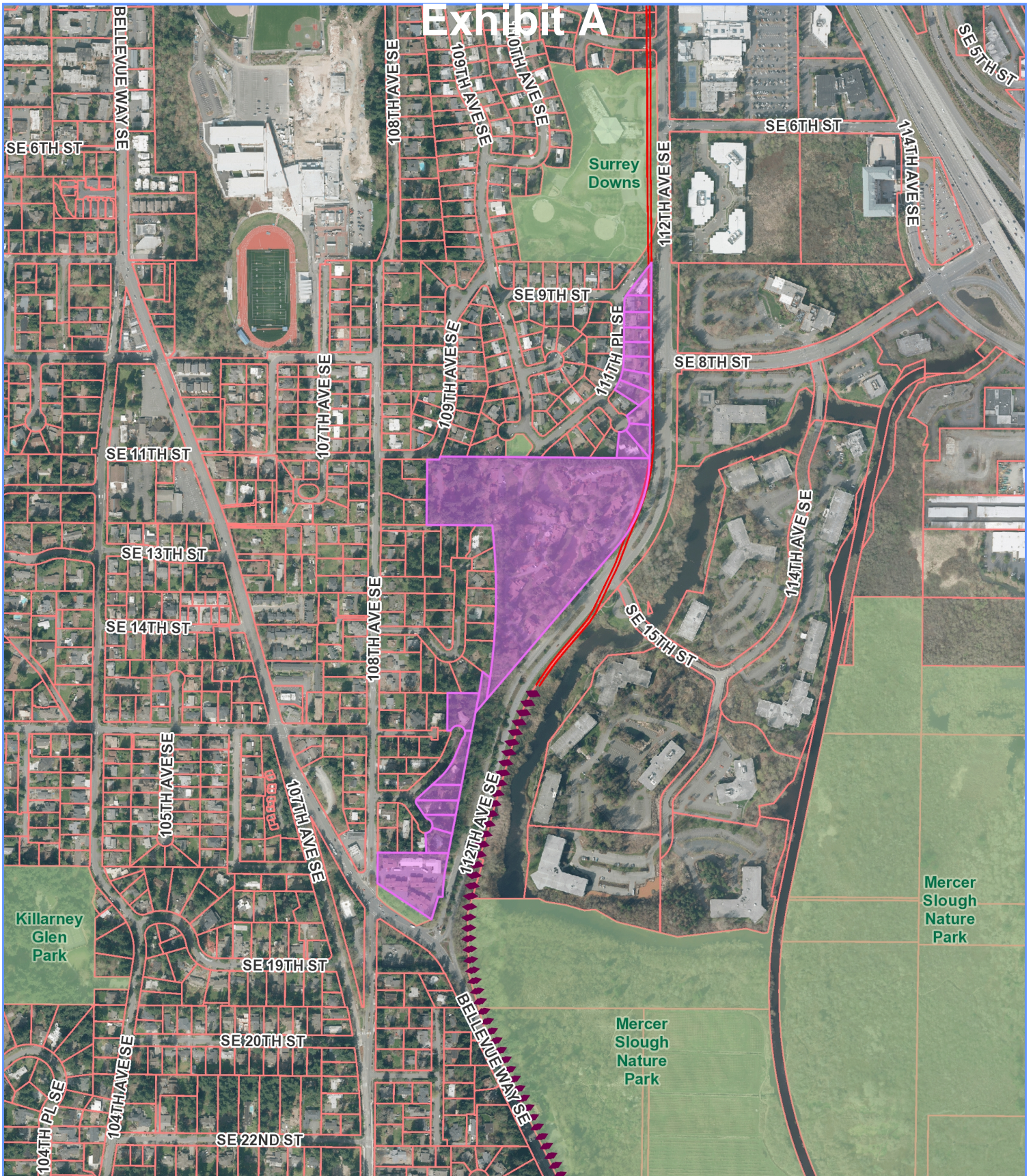


East Link Package Offers 2



0 223 447
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Exhibit A



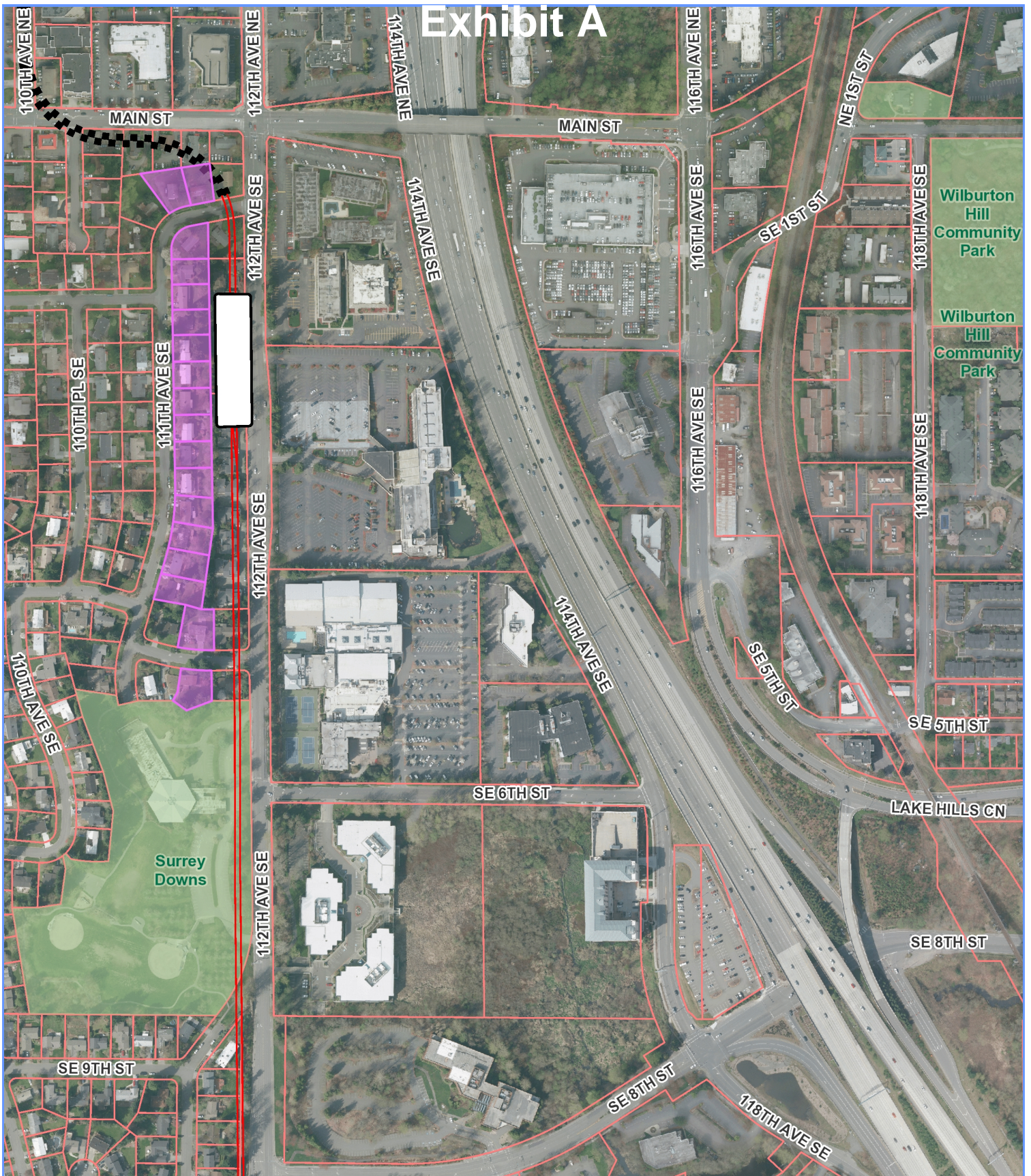
East Link Package Offers 3



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Scale 1: 7,426 Feet

Exhibit A



East Link Package Offers 4



0 190 380
Scale 1: 4,564 Feet