

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT:

East Link Project Update.

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POLICY ISSUES:

The general policy guidance below informs the City's work on this final design phase of the East Link Project.

Comprehensive Plan Policies:

The Comprehensive Plan contains a body of adopted policy, which emerged from the Light Rail Best Practices work, to frame the City's role in light rail project development, including advancing the City's land use and transportation objectives and minimizing neighborhood and environmental impacts.

MOU with Sound Transit:

The City and Sound Transit entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in November 2011 that defines City contributions to a downtown light rail tunnel. The MOU also provides the basis for a Collaborative Design Process (CDP) that was further defined and agreed to in January 2012. The CDP provides the mechanism for the City and Sound Transit to jointly advance the design of the East Link Project through the 60% design phase.

Light Rail Overlay District:

In addition to collaborating with Sound Transit within the framework of the MOU, the City is the permitting agency for East Link within Bellevue. The Council adopted Land Use Code (LUC) Part 20.25M defining development standards and design guidelines, which shape staff's feedback on design issues. The LUC provisions also establish the permitting process for East Link with a Light Rail Permitting Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC).

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL:

- Action
- Discussion
- Information

City Staff will present the monthly East Link Update primarily focused on:

- 112th property acquisition and potential disposition
- Update on the acceleration of 120th Avenue NE and 124th Avenue NE right-of-way acquisition
- Operations and Maintenance Satellite Facility (OMSF) update and next steps.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

I. 112TH AVENUE SE PROPERTIES

Sound Transit's acquisition of residential properties in south Bellevue has been of keen interest to Council and the community. Sound Transit will be present on April 28, 2014 to give a general update on the properties along 112th Avenue SE and to provide an overview of their policies regarding property acquisition and potential disposition. Since they are in the midst of negotiations with individual property owners, we do not expect Sound Transit to discuss specifics regarding these acquisitions. However, we are aware that the community is becoming increasingly interested in knowing more detail about when Sound Transit will finalize acquisition of these parcels and how the parcels may be used and maintained by Sound Transit before, during, and after East Link Construction. Specific answers to these questions rely on a number of details that are still unknown at this time, including the timing of when Sound Transit will reach agreements with the property owners, timing and duration of construction and Sound Transit intentions with respect to disposition of any remnant parcels. We expect Monday's discussion to focus more on identification of areas of concern and an overview of when more certainty may be likely on these points.

Council adopted the Light Rail Overlay District (LUC 20.25M) into the Land Use Code in February 2013. In a regional light rail transit (RLRT) system transition area, minimum setbacks were established. Districts receiving transition are R-1, R-1.8, R-2.5, R-3.5, R-4, R-7, R-7.5, R-10, R-20, and R-30 zoned properties developed in a residential use. The code set a 30-foot landscaped setback from RLRT facility structures and from at-grade or elevated track. Additionally, a 60-foot structure separation is required between the edge of the track-way and any existing primary residential structure. It should be noted there is no provision in the RLRT land use code for an existing owner to remain in their residence should their existing structure fall within the 60-foot structure setback and the existing structure can't be modified to meet the setback. There is opportunity should a future owner come along to re-build up to the 30-foot setback after light rail is established.

Twelve single family residential properties along 112th Avenue SE are impacted by these requirements, as shown on Attachment A, eleven of which Sound Transit will be acquiring property. Of these, four have residential structures that fall within the 30-foot landscape setback; four residential structures fall within the 60-foot structure separation; and two have decks that fall within the 60-foot structure setback (although a deck is not considered a primary structure); and two do not have primary structures or any portion of the deck within any of the setback limits.

While the use of properties after acquisition by Sound Transit has not been specifically identified, established City codes do govern the allowed uses of the property and establish minimum standards for condition of the properties. Generally, the City will impose conditions on the demolition of structures to ensure erosion control measures are in place and that the sites remain secure against use by unauthorized people. Minimum property maintenance standards also could apply. City staff will continue to work with Sound Transit and to inform the

community about details associated with Sound Transit's acquisition of these properties as details become known.

II. UPDATE ON ADVANCING RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION FOR 120TH AVENUE NE AND 124TH AVENUE NE PROJECTS

At the April 7, 2014 Council meeting, staff was given the direction to return with potential financing options to accelerate funding for property acquisition for the 120th and 124th Avenue NE projects. The 2013-2019 Capital Investment plan budgets right-of-way funding in 2015. Staff identified an opportunity to better coordinate with Sound Transit's East Link acquisition if the City's property acquisition could begin this year, 2014. Attachment B is an overall map that presents the various project overlaps.

It is recognized that additional detail is necessary in development of a cost sharing agreement between the City and Sound Transit, which would be completed in conjunction with the MOU confirmation and project baselining. However, negotiating the City's portion of the right-of-way needs in advance of any cost sharing agreements retains maximum flexibility in addressing a coordinated approach, does not obligate the City to a cost sharing agreement, does not obligate the City to pay for any right-of-way needed by Sound Transit and further minimizes continued escalation in acquisition costs.

Staff has continued coordination with Sound Transit regarding acquisition needs for the properties that are impacted by both projects, and the timing of our acquisition schedules. The City anticipates appraisals to be completed and offer letters to be provided by June 2014. Pending negotiations with the affected property owners, the City may or may not need to advance funding. At this time, it is unknown whether the actual payment of funds for right-of-way acquisition will be within 2014 or 2015. As the settlement agreements are completed, staff will return to Council with updated budget and request advancement of any needed funds.

III. OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE SATILLITE FACILITY (OMSF)

Staff has provided periodic updates to Council on the OMSF Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Sound Transit has provided additional clarity on the overall project and process with the draft schedule below:

- OMSF Briefing to ST Capital Committee May 8, 2014
- DEIS published, 45 day comment period begins May 9, 2014
- OMSF Briefing to Bellevue City Council May 19, 2014
- Sound Transit OMSF Public Hearing (Coast Hotel) June 5, 2014
- Comment Period Closes June 23, 2014
- ST Capital Committee recommends preferred site July 10, 2014 (tentative)
- ST Board identifies preferred site for PE/FEIS July 24, 2014 (tentative)

- Phase 2: Preliminary Engineering/FEIS/ROD 3rd Qtr. 2015
- Final Design 3rd Qtr. 2017
- Construction/opening mid 2020

Given the timeline above, specifically the DEIS publication date and comment period, staff has identified a few future Council meetings to discuss the OMSF. Staff has preliminarily targeted

May 19 and two June dates to update Council on staff comments to the DEIS, obtain Council feedback and draft Bellevue's formal public comment letter.

IV. STATION AREA PLANNING

At the April 7 Study Session, staff presented a brief status report on station area planning. Council directed staff to expand the eligibility area for the East Main Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) being formed prior to initiating the station area plan. Staff revised the map per Council direction and mailed the revised packet (see Attachment C) the week of April 21 to more than 2,700 residents, property and business owners in the shaded area on the map. Staff has also provided email notification to area stakeholders noting the packets should be arriving in their mailboxes. The application period is open until May 23, 2014, about four weeks. A list of appointees will be presented to Council for confirmation in early June and the orientation meeting for the CAC will be scheduled for later in June to kick-off the station area planning program for East Main.

Staff will continue to work with the community on the analysis of issues, as well as development of a strategy around the South Bellevue station area. It is anticipated a draft station area plan will be available in June. Feedback from the public will be incorporated into a revised report that is presented to Council for your consideration in mid- to late-July.

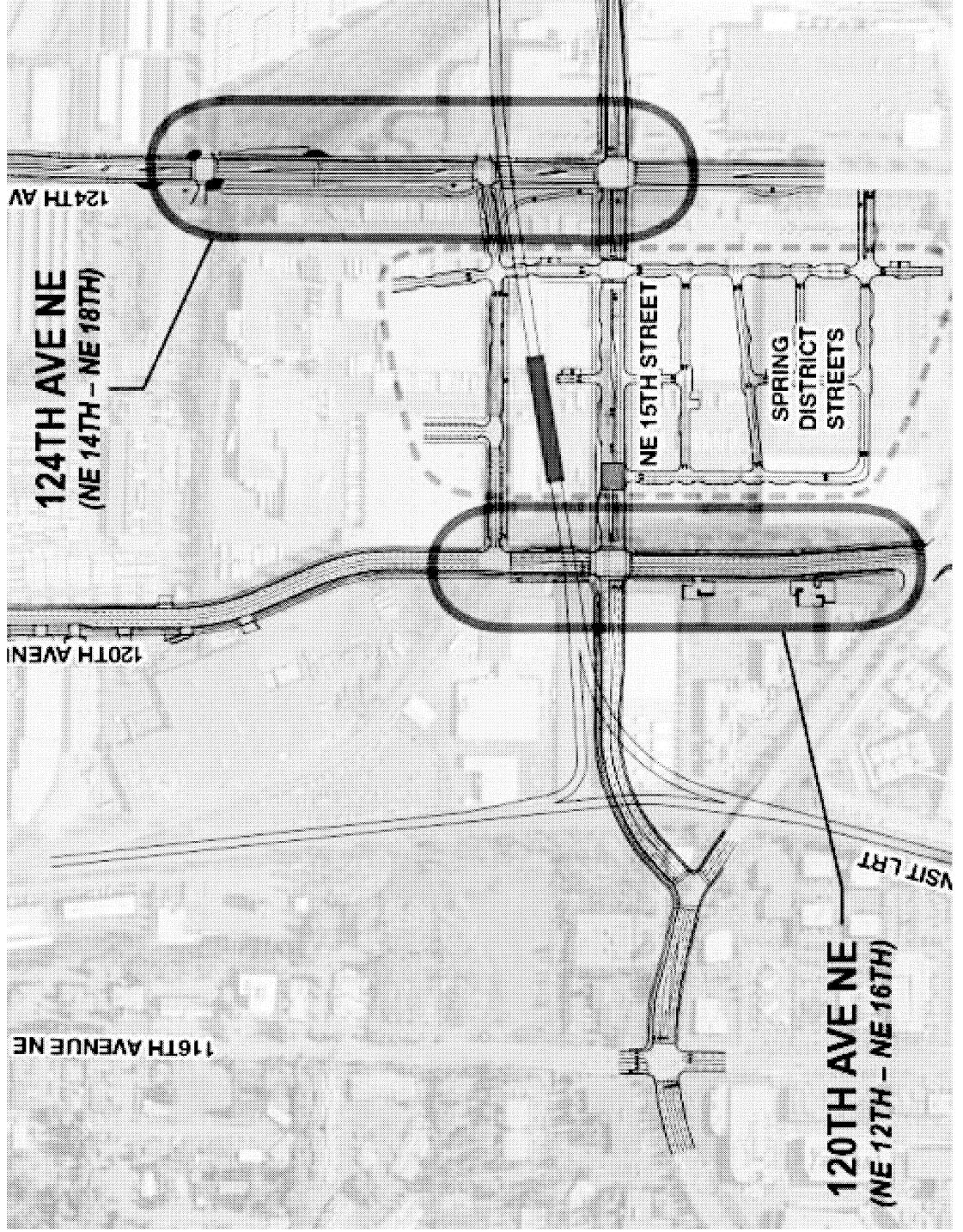
ATTACHMENTS:

- A. 112th Avenue NE Properties
- B. 120th/124th/Sound Transit Composite
- C. East Main Street Citizens Advisory Committee Revised map

112th Avenue NE Properties

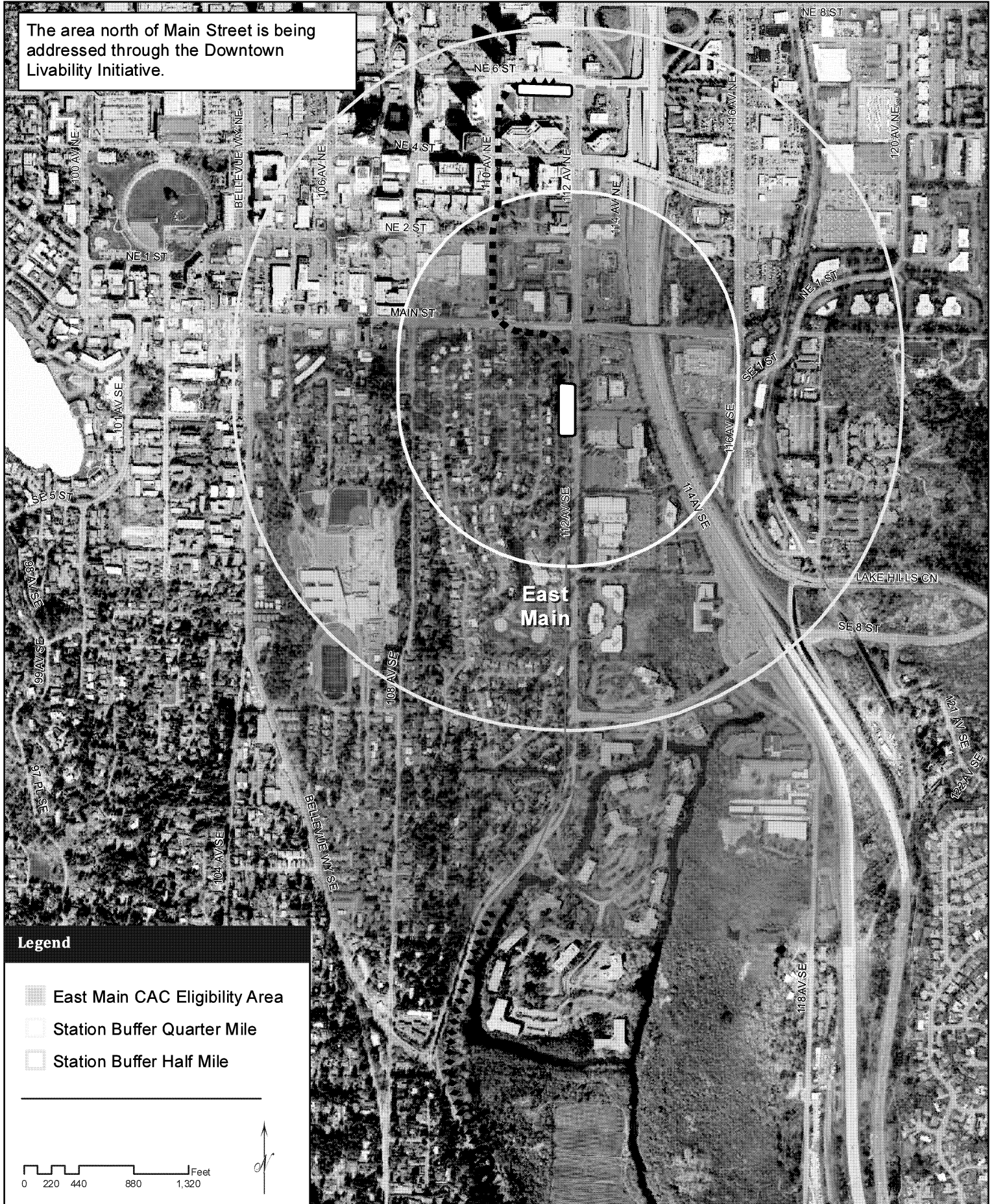


120th Avenue NE / 124th Avenue NE / Sound Transit Composite Project Plan






East Main Station Area

The area north of Main Street is being addressed through the Downtown Livability Initiative.



Legend

-  East Main CAC Eligibility Area
-  Station Buffer Quarter Mile
-  Station Buffer Half Mile

0 220 440 880 1,320 Feet

