

City of Kirkland ST3 Community Update #2:

Questions (grouped into topics) from Comment Cards

This document will continue to grow as we respond to public comments.

Technical Questions

1. Can we see transport reports/eval?
 - a. *Yes, the memorandum from BRT Planning International which analyzed the ST3 templates and was used to prepare the City's comment letter to Sound Transit is available on www.kirklandwa.gov/st3. The final BRT Planning International report is not completed, but will also be available on the City's ST3 website once it is finalized.*
2. The CKC width at NE 52nd St does not appear to be 100 feet wide. Please show how the BRT would fall within the CKC going south of NE 52nd St to 108th Ave NE.
 - a. *Based on our consultant's analysis of the CKC, and the survey that was done prior to purchase of the corridor by the City of Kirkland, the corridor is 100 foot wide between NE 52nd Street and 108th Ave NE. Here's a link to the narrow areas we've identified. (<http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Assets/Keeping+Kirkland+Moving+ST3/Supplemental+ST3+FAQ+Transit+Trail+Fit.pdf>)*
3. A lot of rush hour traffic can be eased by installing a traffic light at 6th and Kirkland Ave. Why not doing this first?
 - a. *A traffic signal at 6th and Kirkland Way is currently being designed and is planned to be constructed later this year.*
4. What about adding continuous metro buses that run the main streets of Kirkland every 10-15 minutes from the 85th station on I405. This is a compromise that solves both sides of the issue-!!
 - a. *The City of Kirkland is currently working with King County Metro on their Long Range Plan (LRP) to determine potential new routes and service levels.*
5. Other cities add high-rise light rail in the middle of the highway - less cost and high efficiency.
 - a. *Sound Transit began to look at light rail in the I-405 corridor but abandoned the study due to the concept's high cost and complication of construction. An elevated line would likely cost more than the mainly at-grade route on the CKC. Also, it is difficult to access I-405.*
6. How does our LRT/BRT hook into the regional rail spine?
 - a. *LRT would connect to Eastlink at Bellevue's Wilburton Station. BRT would connect there and at Bellevue Transit Center.*
7. Do we have future plans for Woodinville/Bothell connections?
 - a. *Sound Transit's ST3 plan does not connect to Woodinville. There is a candidate project in ST3 (E02b-SegA) that includes stops at Canyon Park Park-and-Ride and near UW Bothell on I-405.*

8. Why don't you show realistic renderings of what the CKC will look like with Transit? If you were a private company, you'd be charged with false advertising. (Kirkland is not a wide empty valley!)
 - a. *The renderings were created to give a sense of how trails and transit could fit together on the corridor.*
9. How many people are currently using the Seattle to SeaTac Line?
 - a. *In November of 2015, about 929,000. That's a 6.8% increase over November 2014. You can find out more about Sound Transit ridership here.*
<http://www.soundtransit.org/ridership>
10. Why don't you include (or demand from ST) equally detailed alternative transportation options outside the CKC?
 - a. *Because of Sound Transit's easement on the Eastside Rail Corridor/CKC, they are looking at light rail in that corridor rather than alignments outside the corridor.*
11. Sound Transit speaker mentioned connections from transit on CKC to express buses going west on 520 to Seattle. Currently no express buses stop there so how is it a 'seamless' connection? What are the plans to add stops there by express buses going west on 520?
 - a. *The connection that was probably being referred to would be made at the South Kirkland Park and Ride. You could get off light rail at the Park and Ride and transfer to a bus going across SR 520 (like the 255). Or, with BRT, there would be no transfer, the bus could travel on the CKC and then exit at 108th Street and get onto SR 520 at the direct access ramp. The current set of ST projects does not include a new connection directly to buses on SR 520 that, for example, are coming going from Redmond to Seattle.*
12. How does the cost of mass transit on the CKC and length of ride compare to BRT on I405?
 - a. *There is a discussion of this fairly complicated subject in the memorandum from BRT Planning International which analyzed the ST3 templates and was used to prepare the City's comment letter to Sound Transit at www.kirklandwa.gov/st3.*
13. ST has done ridership projections for all 3 options. What percentage of these riders are Kirkland residents?
 - a. *Because of the way that ST has modeled ridership, we don't know the answer to this question. Also we don't think that ST correctly modeled the best set of transit options in the BRT on CKC option. We expect that Kirkland ridership would be highest on the BRT option because it has the most stops in Kirkland and could offer routes to the highest number of destinations. In contrast, the I-405 option would likely offer the least to Kirkland riders, since there are the fewest stops and the stops are farther from residents and businesses in Kirkland. There's more about these topics in the memorandum from BRT Planning International which analyzed the ST3 templates and was used to prepare the City's comment letter to Sound Transit. It is available on www.kirklandwa.gov/st3.*
14. What is Metro's plan for 255 bus route? Will it remain in place when sound transit line is built?
 - a. *A transit service plan has not been developed for the project. It could be that some of the 255 buses route off of 108th, perhaps some kind of "express service" while other runs of the 255 stay on 108th. In general, one of the advantages of BRT on the CKC is that other routes could use the CKC to deliver a faster trip and that lines that currently make limited stops in Kirkland could be routed on the CKC giving Kirkland access to more transit service.*

15. Bus may not be electric???
 - a. In their [response to the Sound Transit templates](#), the City Council listed a number of conditions which would need to be met before they could support ST 3. One of those conditions was “Only vehicles that are quiet and have zero or near-zero emissions, such as electric vehicles, should operate on the CKC.” Council is also considering designating the corridor as a zero or near-zero emission corridor.
16. What speeds? What noise levels and time of day?
 - a. We estimate that the operating speed of transit on the CKC would be around 35 MPH or less. In their [response to the Sound Transit templates](#), the City Council listed a number of conditions which would need to be met before they could support ST 3. One of those conditions was “Only vehicles that are quiet and have zero or near-zero emissions, such as electric vehicles, should operate on the CKC.” so noise should be low. Operating plans for transit haven’t been developed, but the [Sound Transit templates](#) indicate that BRT would operate “...up to 19 hours of service Monday – Saturday, 17 hours on Sunday. The span of service for light rail is not indicated in the templates.
17. Who forecast the employee and resident increases?
 - a. *The Puget Sound Regional Council makes forecasts about growth. Here’s a link <http://www.psrc.org/data/forecasts>*
18. 10-15 years for transit improvements seems too little, too late for the population growth projections. And in conjunction with the Totem Lake and Kirkland Parkplace Developments. What is the transportation plan until HCT on the CKC? Be it from ST, Metro, Other?
 - a. *The City of Kirkland is currently providing input to King County Metro’s Long Range Plan, which will shape future Metro routes and service areas.*
19. What agency (agencies) must step up to add lanes/ bus stops on I-405 along with expanded hub and spoke routes to get Kirkland residents to I-405 in a timely manner?
 - a. *Sound Transit is attempting to increase bus stops on I-405 with the ST3 package. WSDOT recently completed their expanded HOV lanes between Bellevue and NE 128th Street.*
20. Has the benefits of E-03 & E-06 been quantified, specifically?
 - a. *The Sound Transit analysis has not been prepared in terms of benefits. There is a section that discusses this shortfall in the memorandum from BRT Planning International which analyzed the ST3 templates and was used to prepare the City’s comment letter to Sound Transit. It is available on www.kirklandwa.gov/st3.*
21. What is the timeline for EIS for each option (for the CKC)
 - a. *Sound Transit would be doing environmental work after a successful ballot measure, and before any construction, but exactly when will depend upon when a particular project will be funded in the ST 3 package. There is currently no information available about the details of project timing.*
22. Timeline for transit on CKC/ERT * Any gnty (guarantee) that transit won’t be developed until 2030’s.
 - a. *Sound Transit, once they determine the final list of projects they will be putting on the ballot, will also determine the project priority list. The timeline we know is that Sound Transit will be taking ST3 to the voters in November of this year.*

Traffic Questions

23. With buses or light rail crossing 108th about 68th (north of 7-11 on 70th) how will traffic on 108th Ave be negatively impacted by significant bus/rail crossings projected at 6-10 minutes?

- a. *This would all have to be studied, but here are some estimates to give an idea of how one concept might work.*

If there were rail on the CKC, there would likely be gates that would come down across 6th Street, the train would go by and the gates would go back up. The train might be 200' long and if it were traveling at 30 mph, across a (approximately) 35' wide 6th Street it would block the street for about 5 seconds. Extra time would be needed for the lights to come on, gates to come down, gates to go back up etc.

A bus system might use a traffic signal; with a 3.5 second yellow, followed by a 1 second all-red phase. The signal could be operated so that it only turns green for the CKC when a bus is approaching. Considering a 60' bus, the bus would might cause a 7 second delay to traffic.

For reference, under current operations, a walker might travel at 3.5 feet per second and therefore would take 10 seconds to cross a 35' wide street. Of course pedestrians can cross whenever they wish under today's configuration and cars must yield, so if the pedestrians were spaced just right, they could stop traffic for a long time.

24. How will you address the traffic problem that mass transit on the CKC will cause at the many intersections it crosses in Kirkland?

- a. *See answer to question 25. There are 6 crossings assuming that transit would cross NE 124 Avenue and NE 124th Street on an aerial structure.*

25. What are provisions for parking at each train or bus stop either on corridor or 405?

- a. *Station locations and parking management strategies have not been identified. The City has flagged this as an issue and it was included in [our letter to Sound Transit](#) as one of the issues that will have to be mitigated as part of any Sound Transit package before the City can support ST 3.*

26. How much will it reduce local street traffic? What existing bus routes will be moved to this new system?

- a. *See answers to questions 14 and 15. The level of modeling that has been done at this point is not sophisticated enough to make a determination of exactly how Kirkland streets will be affected.*

A transit service plan has not been developed for the project. It could be that some of existing buses use the CKC while others or parts of others stay on their existing routes. Perhaps some kind of "express service" route variations could be created. In general, one of the advantages of BRT on the CKC is that other routes could use the CKC to deliver a faster trip and that lines that currently make limited stops in Kirkland could be routed on the CKC giving Kirkland access to more transit service.

Environmental/Trail Questions

27. According to this evening's presentation and statements that there is not a good quality habitat - why are there irritating 'sensitive environment' signs along trail at this time? I realize re-landscape work can be environmentally friendly but telling us to be 'sensitive' now to rail/bus is kind of silly!
- Those signs were required by the grant that paid for installation of the interim trail. The City is examining whether or not we need so many of them. The areas signed as 'sensitive' are in fact sensitive areas. However, they are filled with invasive species such as blackberry, tansy ragwort, and Japanese knotweed and others. One of the ideas is that after Transit is constructed we can end up with as much or more wetlands of higher quality.*
28. How many trees will need to be cut down for the 100' wide cut?
- Minimizing and mitigating environmental impacts of any Sound Transit project is one of the commitments that the City has requested of Sound Transit before Kirkland can support an ST 3 package. The number of trees that would be cut down has not been determined.*
29. We thought the additional cost would be the cities if the trail is moved, has this changed since last meeting?
- Sound Transit has indicated that they will relocate and replace the trail as required by their [easement](#). The [City's latest letter to Sound Transit](#) includes the following statement: "Any Sound Transit project on the CKC must include design and construction of a trail that implements the CKC master Plan vision for the main trail and preserves accessibility with numerous safe east/west crossing in addition to crossings at street intersections."*
30. What property would be used to replace trail if needed?
- Kirkland believes that all improvements will be contained within the existing right-of-way, including the upgraded trail.*
31. I see numerous signs marking 'environmentally sensitive' areas to the side of the developed trail. Are these even true, and if so, is ST subject to the same environmental review process as a private party?
- See question 27. The City believes that ST would perform a Federal level environmental review in addition to a State level review. They would likely do this in order to make the project eligible for federal funding. A private party would not be subject to this level of review.*
32. City council says putting mass transit on the CKC is part of their plan to keep Kirkland green. Isn't a pedestrian trail with a thick surrounding of trees, bushes, wildlife, wetlands, and sensitive areas the greenest option of all?
- Auto travel is a leading cause of greenhouse gasses as well as water and air pollution. Effective transit can provide an alternative to auto travel and reduce these harmful impacts.*
33. What will it take for Kirkland City Council to stop pushing for mass transit on the CKC and instead start pushing to protect the trail as the green gem that it is?
- Actually, the Council has been doing both. The Council had the foresight, in the face of opposition, to 1) purchase the corridor, 2) remove the rails and 3) build an interim trail.*

At each step there were a number of people who pleaded with the Council not to move forward and at each step transit on the corridor was openly discussed. The [City's latest letter to Sound Transit](#) includes the following statement: "Any Sound Transit project on the CKC must include design and construction of a trail that implements the CKC master Plan vision for the main trail and preserves accessibility with numerous safe east/west crossing in addition to crossings at street intersections."

34. Have the negative impacts of the new HCT on the CKC been quantified? Physics laws say 2 things cannot occupy the same space at the same time. A new system will displace existing transportation, in time.
- Neither the negative nor positive impacts of HCT on the CKC have been quantified, but you might like to take a look at questions 17, 25, 29, 30 and 34. There's no intent for a trail and transit to be on top of each other; they can both fit beside each other in the CKC. From a Newtonian physics stand point it should be okay.*

Access Questions

35. Recently access to the trail was added at 55th St, 60th St, etc. How will the community easily access trail if bus/ or light rail is blocking access from the east side of the trail?
- The [City's latest letter to Sound Transit](#) includes the following statement: "Any Sound Transit project on the CKC must include design and construction of a trail that implements the CKC master Plan vision for the main trail and preserves accessibility with numerous safe east/west crossing in addition to crossings at street intersections."*
36. How is access to pedestrian trail planned if accessing across bus or train route - Overpass? Underpasses? At each trail access point on the eastside?
- (See question 35) The kinds and numbers of crossings are still to be designed and will depend on whether transit is bus or rail. Even at the highest frequency of vehicles, there will still be several minutes between buses. It will likely be easier to cross the corridor with a bus system - that should be more like crossing a narrow road- than if it is a rail corridor. Rail corridors usually are more heavily fenced to prevent access.*
37. Where are the busses or LR accessing the trail? How often will they run?
- Both systems would access the corridor in Totem Lake, between NE 124th Street and the I-405 undercrossing. Buses could arrive at this point from various origins; but trains would begin in the Totem Lake area. Buses could leave the corridor and serve downtown Kirkland or other destinations. Trains would continue to Bellevue from the South Kirkland Park and Ride. Buses could also do that or instead they could get on SR 520 and go to Seattle.*
- The [Sound Transit templates](#) call for 7.5 minute rail frequencies in the peak periods and peak bus frequencies of 10 minutes.*
38. How will I get on/off the BRT or LR when there is only 1 park and ride along the route and it is already at capacity- plus it will be extra full from the 255 not running on side streets?
- Ideally, you could ride a bike, walk or take a connecting bus. There would be park and rides at the north (Kingsgate Park and Ride) and the south (South Kirkland Park and Ride). Depending on the mode, there can also be stops in between the two Park and Rides.*

39. How far of a walk will it be from the transit on CKC to Evergreen Hospital?
- a. *The Sound Transit templates on the CKC go to the NE 128th direct access overpass, and from there it is less than a quarter-mile to Evergreen Hospital.*

Property Value Questions

40. What guarantees are there that the BRT along CKC will not disturb/interrupt/impact residences and businesses that reside on either side of CKC?
- a. *It is unlikely that BRT along the CKC will not disturb, interrupt, or impact any residences or businesses in some way at some point during the process from construction to operation. The City of Kirkland is requesting commitments from Sound Transit. We are requesting that ST use quiet, zero or near-zero emissions buses to make these impacts as minimal as possible.*
41. The current light rail system from downtown to Seattle to Seatac does not go directly through any residential neighborhoods. Due to CKC being quite narrow and passing through high rent neighborhoods, how can it be guaranteed that property values are not negatively impacted?
- a. See question 40.

Business Questions

42. How much input does google have in the making of these conclusions? Why don't they provide buses like Microsoft?
- a. *Google has not provided any input into the ST3 process, but when they funded the improvements between their developments, they were built with the understanding that Sound Transit could require much/all of the improvements be removed/relocated. They built their bridge between their buildings at a height that would not impede potential Light Rail improvements. Google is a private business and the ST3 proposal is not driven by their desire to provide transportation options to their employees.*
43. Will developers, i.e. Kirkland parkplace, totem lake be required to provide revenue to ST due to their future burden on transportation systems
- a. *New developments pay impact fees to the City of Kirkland that help pay for construction of the transportation system. Sound Transit is not allowed to levy such fees. Sound Transit's revenue sources include property taxes that are paid by all property owners.*

Ballot Questions

44. If the November ballot does not pass, will that put a stop to this project?
- a. *Sound Transit will retain their easement on the corridor, and the City of Kirkland is committed to transit on the corridor in order to offer transit alternatives and help mitigate traffic congestion. The City Council has indicated that they would be interested in partnering with Metro if Sound Transit is not an active partner. Also, the Sound Transit Board could reformulate a package and put it on a future ballot.*
45. What happens if ST3 is not approved?
- a. See question 44.

46. Can the 3 candidate projects be developed for voters on the Nov. 16th Ballot to vote on individually? If not, why not?
- a. *The Sound Transit Board is developing a coordinated transit system across the region and that system needs to be considered as a package. The ballot measure will include projects from across the three voting counties, and it would be impractical to build a regional system with each project being voted upon individually.*
47. What exactly are voters voting for in Nov'16? If voters vote 'NO', what does that mean to Kirkland?
- a. *The Sound Transit Board will be proposing a package of regional transit improvements, and that's what you will be voting on. At this point, the Board has not determined what projects will be in that package, and whether or not any projects in Kirkland will be included. The Board will have to make a final decision on the content of the ballot measure by June. See question 44 for more on what happens if the vote fails.*
48. If ST3 does not include one, two, or all three options, is Kirkland precluded from receiving funding for HCT on the CKC in the future?
- a. *If Kirkland projects were not included in the current ST 3 measure, Kirkland would not receive any funding from ST3. But, Sound Transit will retain their easement on the corridor, and the City of Kirkland is committed to transit on the corridor in order to offer transit alternatives and help mitigate traffic congestion. The City Council has indicated that they would be interested in partnering with Metro if Sound Transit is not an active partner. Also, the Sound Transit Board could propose future packages that could include projects in Kirkland.*
49. Is ST3 Option E-02 use 06 use 03 'either' 'or' or 'and'? In other words, if we support one, does it preclude supporting another?
- a. *The Council's [letter to Sound Transit](#) supports BRT on I-405 with access at NE 85th and South Totem Lake. It also supports adequate funding for LRT on the CKC, but with the decision of mode BRT or LRT to be made after the ST3 vote.*

Safety Questions

50. How to guarantee safety of people using CKC?
- a. *Most of the safety concerns we have heard involve crossing the corridor once HCT is in place.*
51. How will having mass transit on the CKC affect families with young children- especially those with kids at Lakeview and Peter Kirk?
- a. *It will make effective transit an accessible option for people of all ages, along with a bicycle and pedestrian trail of the highest quality that makes it easy for people to get to school without the need to drive a car if they so choose.*

Undefined Questions

52. The reaction from Kirkland residents has been very strongly AGAINST mass transit on the CKC. How has this affected your thought process and plans?
- a. *The City Council has listened carefully to all viewpoints. In addition to those who are against transit, there have been a number of people who have voiced support for*

putting high capacity transit on the CKC. The Sound Transit easement was in place when we purchased the property, and it was always intended for some sort of HCT to eventually occupy the corridor. The potential has come sooner than expected, and it has the capability to benefit the residents of Kirkland, and the Eastside as a whole. Kirkland has worked hard to engage residents in the process, and encourage you to stay involved in the process.