



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**Planning and Building Department**  
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## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Joel Pfundt, Transportation Manager

**From:** Allison Zike, AICP, Senior Planner  
Jeremy McMahan, Deputy Planning & Building Director

**Date:** September 14, 2020

**Subject:** NE 85<sup>th</sup> St Station Area Plan  
File No. CAM20-00153

### **Staff Recommendation**

The Transportation Commission should review the project initial concepts and alternatives development memorandum (see Attachment 1) prepared by [Mithūn](#) for the July 21<sup>st</sup> City Council meeting, and discuss project progress and next steps.

### **Background**

With the 2019-2020 budget, City Council authorized \$450,000 for creation of a Station Area Plan (SAP) associated with the Sound Transit Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station planned for the I-405/NE 85<sup>th</sup> St interchange. The funding was dedicated to retain a multi-disciplinary urban design team to lead the City's development of the SAP.

In addition to the City's budget, the Department of Commerce has awarded Kirkland \$150,000 through the [E2SHB 1923 Grant program](#). These additional funds allowed the project scope to be expanded to include a Planned Action Ordinance (PAO) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Form-based Codes (FBCs) in the study area. The advantage of a Planned Action Ordinance is to streamline environmental review for future development project in the Station Area. The creation of form-based codes for the Station Area will provide the community with graphic examples of the type of development anticipated, help create effective transitions between high and low intensity land uses, and establish standards for quality public spaces within the Station Area.

### **Project Progress**

The memorandum prepared by Mithun (see Attachment 1) includes a brief summary of the progress made in the initial phases of the Station Area Plan project, including development and publication of an [Opportunities and Challenges Report](#) and a [Market Analysis Report](#) for the study area. The attached memorandum also includes a summary of public input received to date.

### **Planning Commission and City Council Direction**

Staff held a study session with Planning Commission on June 25, 2020 and City Council on July 21, 2020 to present the Station Area Plan initial concepts and request direction on alternatives development. The below key points and questions were raised by the Commission and Council in relation to the preliminary alternatives:

- Interest in emphasizing further study and creative alternatives in the light industrial area of Norkirk where the project team has identified a preliminary concept Flex Office/Small Business area
- Several Planning Commissioners raised questions about the perceived lack of difference between preliminary Alternative 1 (no action alternative) and preliminary Alternative 2, and gave direction that Alternative 2 should be explore taller building heights in the Rose Hill Business District
  - *Staff Response: the project team has revised preliminary Alternative 2 to study mid-rise office/residential mixed buildings up to 10 stories; the preliminary alternative discussed by Planning Commission proposed studying building heights up to only 6 stories.*
- Interest in continued consideration of the parking strategy for the Station Area, particularly in any future commercial areas and in neighborhoods that may be impacted by BRT Station parking
- Support for incorporating signature community space(s) (e.g. parks, schools, recreational facilities, meeting spaces, etc.) into the Station Area
- Support to continue project emphasis on equity and inclusivity
- Desire for the plan to acknowledge any possible delays in delivery of the Sound Transit BRT and interchange project and discuss how Station Area Plan can be flexible to address any associated issues

### **Next Steps**

With direction from the Planning Commission and City Council, the project team has begun analyzing the draft alternatives and started work on the Draft SEIS. Public engagement phases planned for late Fall 2020 will seek community input to guide selection of a preferred alternative and solicit comments on the Draft SEIS. Staff will return to Transportation and Planning Commissions, and City Council in early 2021 to report out the input received from the aforementioned community input, and to discuss the Draft SEIS and selection of a preferred alternative. Final adoption of the Station Area Plan is anticipated in Spring 2021.

### **Attachments:**

1. Initial Concepts and Preliminary Alternatives Memorandum, prepared by Mithūn, dated July 7, 2020

cc: File Number CAM20-00153