



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Planning and Building Department
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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

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

Date: January 7, 2021

Subject: NE 85th St Station Area Plan
File No. CAM20-00153

Staff Recommendation

Review the [NE 85th St Station Area Plan Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement \(DSEIS\)](#) and summary memo prepared by [Mithūn](#) (see Attachment 1), the City's lead consultant for the project, and provide direction for the formation of a preferred alternative for the Station Area Plan. The following discussion topics are recommended to assist the Council in their deliberations:

- What are the top three elements you like within each alternative, and would like to see incorporated into the preferred alternative? Consider goals and policies, and land use concepts including changes to map designations and infrastructure investments.
- Which elements best promote the project's equity goals? Considerations include increasing the supply of affordable housing, providing opportunities for people of all walks of life to live, work and play in Kirkland, and ensuring that the benefits and burdens of proposed development are equitably distributed to all of Kirkland's residents and employees, regardless of race, age, income, or English language proficiency.
- Are the alternatives missing any key elements (e.g., related to job/housing opportunities, integration with BRT station, incentives to foster small businesses, infrastructure, schools, open space/parks)?

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 85th 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 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) Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) and Form-based Codes (FBCs) in the study area. The advantage of a Planned Action Ordinance is to streamline environmental review for future development projects 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.

In response to questions regarding the status of the WSDOT/Sound Transit I-405 BRT project, that freeway project is proceeding toward retaining a design/build contractor and delivery of the station is still tentatively scheduled for 2025, with confirmation anticipated after Sound Transit realignment decisions scheduled for Summer, 2021.

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.

Staff and the consultant team have conducted ongoing public outreach to inform the community about project status and opportunities to provide feedback to the project team and appointed and elected officials. A virtual Community Workshop was held on January 7, 2021. A summary of community comments from the workshop is included as Attachment 2, and an overview of public outreach to-date is included in the memorandum prepared by Mithun (see Attachment 1).

Additionally, direction received from the Planning Commission at their January 14, 2021 meeting will be relayed to Council at the study session.

DSEIS Alternatives Summary

The DSEIS for the project was published on January 5, 2021, which began the formal DSEIS public comment period. The public comment period runs through February 5, 2021. Below is a summary of the three Station Area Plan alternatives studied in the DSEIS:

Alternative 1 – No Action

- Maintains existing zoning and aligned with Comprehensive Plan, neighborhood plans, and other plans.
- Includes WSDOT/ST I-405 and NE 85th St Interchange and Stride BRT Station project which integrates with local transit on NE 85th St and minor streetscape improvements associated with planned projects.
- Alternative 1 allows for the least housing and job growth of each alternative. It contributes to the adopted Comprehensive Plan capacity and would contain

about 2,782 dwellings and 10,859 jobs, slightly higher than the 2019 estimates of 1,909 dwellings and 4,988 jobs.

Alternative 2– Guiding Mixed Use Growth

- Allows for moderate growth throughout the district, with mixed use residential and office focus up to 10 stories in existing commercial areas like Rose Hill and limited infill in established areas. Enhance existing transportation plans including additional bike lanes, sidewalks, and minor green street improvements.
- Alternative 2 would provide for 6,600 new dwellings, and 23,700 new jobs. For the year 2044, the anticipated total growth levels would be up to 8,509 households and 28,688 jobs.

Alternative 3– Transit Oriented Hub

- Allows for additional growth throughout the district, with mixed use residential and office focus up to 20 stories in select commercial areas like Rose Hill, and infill in established areas.
- More substantial multi-modal transportation improvements, coordinated district scale environmental strategies, and signature “blue street” streetscape improvements to treat stormwater.
- Alternative 3 would add capacity for 9,000 new housing units and 30,000 jobs, a substantial addition to the city’s capacity. For the year 2044, the anticipated total growth levels would be up to 10,909 households and 34,988 jobs.

Mithun’s memorandum also includes a description of each development typology proposed in the alternatives, and a summary of how each alternative is anticipated to guide future growth in a manner consistent with the project objectives of equity, livability, and sustainability.

Next Steps

With direction from the Planning Commission and City Council, the project team will begin forming a preferred alternative, and begin work on the Final SEIS and PAO, and the draft Form-based Codes. Staff will return to City Council multiple times in Spring 2021 to present and refine the preferred alternative, as well as to discuss the Form-based Code draft. Final adoption of the Station Area Plan is anticipated in Late Spring or Early Summer 2021.

Attachments:

1. Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) Memorandum, prepared by Mithun, dated January 6, 2021
2. Summary of January 7, 2021 Community Workshop, prepared by Mithun

cc: File Number CAM20-00153



Seattle
Pier 56, 1201 Alaskan Way #200
Seattle, WA 98101

San Francisco
660 Market Street #300
San Francisco, CA 94104

Los Angeles
Mithun | Hodgetts + Fung
5837 Adams Boulevard
Culver City, CA 90232

Memorandum

To: Allison Zike, Senior Planner, City of Kirkland

From: Erin Christensen Ishizaki, Mithun

Att: Attachment 1: Key Decisions Schedule; Attachment 2: Kirkland NE 85th Street Station Area Plan Alternatives; Attachment 3: Kirkland NE 85th St Station Area Plan and Planned Action: Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Chapter 1: Summary

cc:

Re: Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS)

Date: Wednesday, January 6th 2021

Project #: 193000

Project: NE 85th Street BRT Station Area Plan

Recommendation

The attached documents and accompanying presentation provide information about the three alternatives analyzed in the NE 85th Street Station Area Plan Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS), including the differences between alternatives that will guide growth around Sound Transit's new bus rapid transit (BRT) Stride station over the next fifteen to twenty years, the potential impacts and benefits of each, and potential mitigations. As a reminder, the focus of the project is the area in the City of Kirkland surrounding the new Sound Transit bus rapid transit station and WSDOT interchange improvements, which have their own separate planning process.

Council feedback is sought on which elements of these three Station Area alternatives you support. The project team will use this feedback along with public comments received during the DSEIS Comment period, the accompanying public meeting, and upcoming presentation to City Council, to help select which features will be incorporated into the 'preferred alternative'. Key questions for consideration include:

- What are the top three elements you like within each alternative, and would like to see incorporated into the preferred alternative? Consider goals and policies, land use concepts including changes to map designations and infrastructure investments as well as consistency edits to the Comprehensive Plan.
- Which development typologies align with project goals? Are they applied appropriately to respond to and integrate the Stride BRT Station and provide for housing and job opportunities?

- Which best promote the project's equity goals? Considerations include increasing the supply of affordable housing, providing opportunities for people of all walks of life to live, work and play in Kirkland, and ensuring that the benefits and burdens of proposed development are equitably distributed to all of Kirkland's residents and employees, regardless of race, age, income, or English language proficiency.
- What types of public and private investment in infrastructure and transportation solutions are necessary to support the preferred alternative?
- What open space and park investments are suited to a transit-oriented urban neighborhood?
- How can we accommodate school facilities in an urban environment?
- How can the preferred alternative create a mix of incentives and requirements to address equity and support large and small households and large and small businesses?
- Are there any development typologies you think should be eliminated from consideration anywhere within the Station Area? Are the areas that have been identified for specific typologies and maximum heights appropriate?
- Are there additional key concepts for transitioning from higher intensity development to lower intensity developments that should be considered?

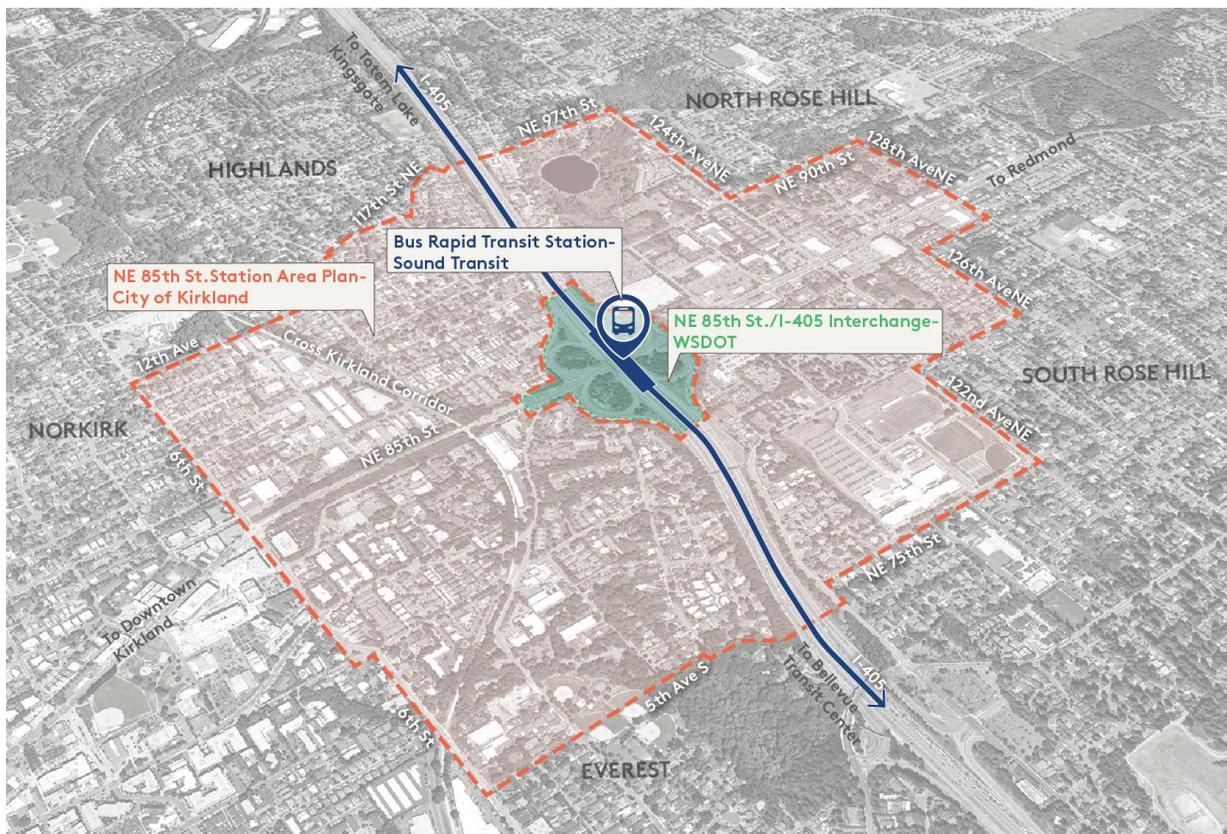


Fig 1. Station Area Plan study area

Project Status

This project will result in a Station Area Plan for the study area, a supplement to the 2035 Comprehensive Plan EIS, updates to the Comprehensive Plan, as well as a Form Based Code. Completed phases include Opportunities and Challenges with the publication of the [Opportunities and Challenges Report](#) and supplemental [Market Study](#); and [Initial Concepts](#) shared as part of the scoping period in a June 4th Online Community Workshop. Based on input from the public, Planning Commission, and City Council, the project team developed three Alternatives to analyze in the DSEIS, and a project Objective. The Project Objective is used to assess how well each alternative promotes the City of Kirkland's values and goals for the Station Area Plan area.

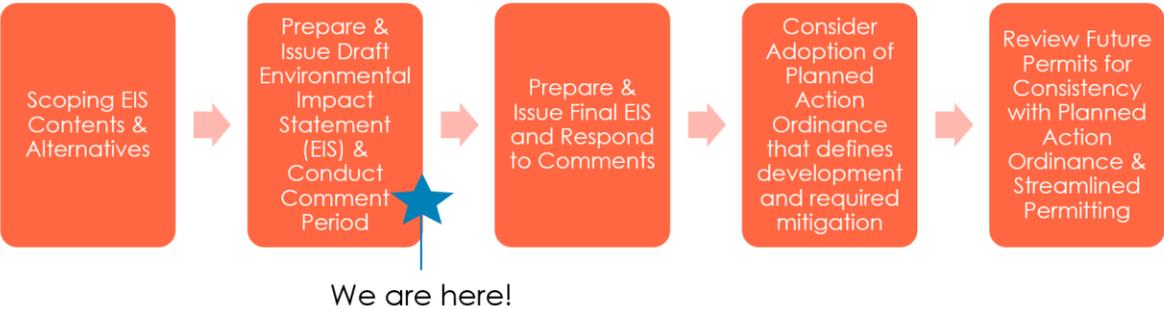
The DSEIS analyzing the three alternatives (a No Action Alternative and two Action Alternatives) was published on January 5, 2021, kicking off the 30-day Comment Period. Based on the input received during the ongoing DSEIS Comment Period, including Planning Commission and City Council meetings, the project team will develop the direction for a preferred alternative, which will be refined into a final preferred alternative with Planning Commission and Council in March, 2021. This final preferred alternative will set the direction for the Draft Station Area Plan.

Additional Information on schedule and key decision points is provided in Attachment 1: Key Decisions Schedule

Figure 2. Engagement Processes



Figure 3. Environmental Review Process



Summary of Outreach and Engagement to Date

As part of the engagement plan, the project team planned a review of engagement to date. The purpose is to evaluate our success in reaching the priority groups identified in the overall Public Participation Plan for this project, and re-adjust strategies as needed. This evaluation allowed the team to further the project's equity goals through seeking to recognize the diversity of perspectives held by Station Area residents and employees are represented in our engagement. The outreach strategies that have been used to inform specific groups about the Station Area Plan are described in the following table.

Group	Outreach Strategy
Station Area Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at neighborhood association/KAN meetings • Postcard mailed to all residents and property owners within study area • One-time emails to Rose Hill, Market, Norkirk, Highlands neighborhood plan update listservs • Distribution of project introduction and poster with project information to multi-family/assisted living communities
Station Area Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach to business owners within study area (early 2020 business/employee survey) • Request for major employers (e.g. Google, Costco, etc.) to distribute prepared information to employees
Renters 28% of pop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created list of building and property managers. • KCHA and ARCH were asked detailed questions about the best engagement tactics to reach their communities via email.
People with Limited English Proficiency 7% of pop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach to Chinese Information & Services Center, Sea Mar Community Health Center, and India Association of Western WA. • Gained traction with CISC and they have helped spread the word and helped us strategize about the best way to move forward with Chinese language engagement. As a result of their input, we are offering the community the opportunity to request Chinese meetings.
People of Color 18% of pop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributed outreach information to ethnic groceries/businesses



Youth 26% of pop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project assignment at Lake Washington High School (2 Economics classes)
Low income Population 6% of pop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy organizations were asked questions about engagement tactics via email. • Ongoing coordination with Sophia's Way, who is interested in distributing materials through their outreach coordinators.
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several posts in "This Week in Kirkland", and City Facebook, Twitter, Youtube accounts • Community Open House #1 (June 2020- Held on zoom) • Community Open House #2 (January 7, 2020- held on zoom) • Request for transit/bike/pedestrian organizations, unions, service- and faith-based organizations, and community groups to distribute prepared information to members and networks.

Project Objective

Leverage the WSDOT/Sound Transit I-405 and NE 85th St Interchange and Inline BRT station regional transit investment to maximize transit-oriented development and create the most value for the City of Kirkland, community benefits including affordable housing, and quality of life for people who live, work, and visit Kirkland.

Underpinning that objective are three distinct **values**:

- **Livability:** includes creating a built environment that promotes health, improves quality of life, integrates community design, creates a unique civic identity, and builds social cohesion.
- **Sustainability:** supporting built and natural systems that protect and enhance habitats, create a healthy environment, address resilience to climate change and other natural and human-made crises, and promote resource efficiency.
- **Equity:** ensuring Kirkland and the station area expand access to opportunity for all residents and visitors to Kirkland, supporting just distribution of benefits and burdens and encompassing inclusive opportunities for economic, physical, and social well-being.

Project Goals

The City of Kirkland established three major project goals for the Station Area Plan.

- **Development Near Transit:** Encourage short- and long-term development that supports high capacity transit with a mix of jobs, housing, and civic destinations located within walking distance of BRT.
- **Connected Kirkland:** Create effective last-mile connections between the BRT station and the City's neighborhoods and destinations, prioritizing safety and comfort for transit riders, pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Inclusive District:** Through an equity-centered planning process and design recommendations, cultivate a district that unlocks opportunity for all users with diverse housing choices for a range of income levels, a wide range of employment and economic diversity, and places for celebrating Kirkland's civic identity.

Summary of Alternatives

In Summer 2020, the project team collaborated with Community Members, Planning Commission, City Council and City Staff to develop a consistent Growth Concept for both of the Action Alternatives (Figure 4). Based on these discussions, it was determined that the Alternatives should be distinguished primarily by how much growth would be allowed in each alternative, as well as the physical form of this growth. The locations where major growth is allowed is the same in Alternative 2 and 3. The DSEIS analyzes the potential impacts of these alternatives and of a 'No Action' Alternative, which assumes growth is in line with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

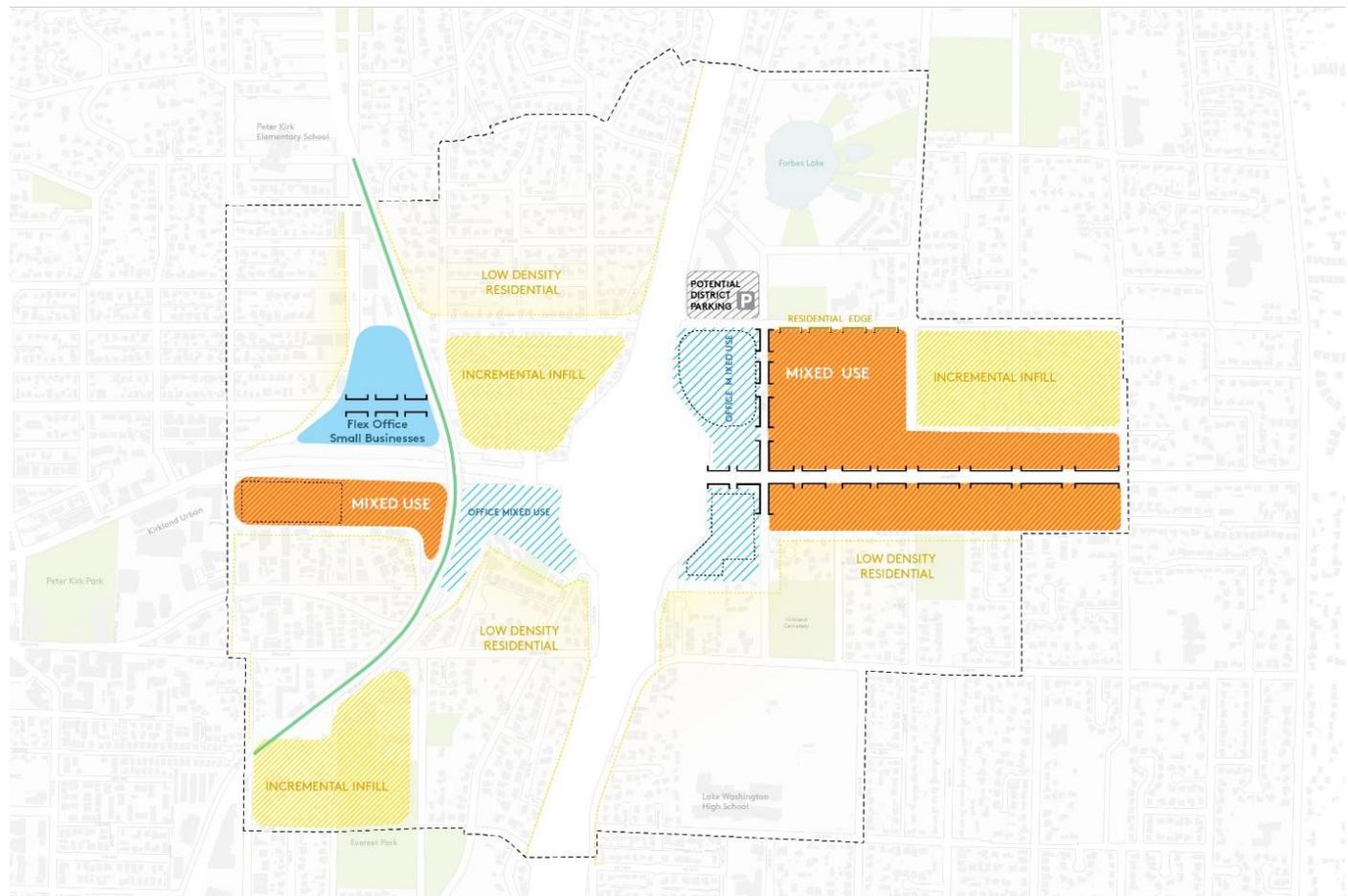
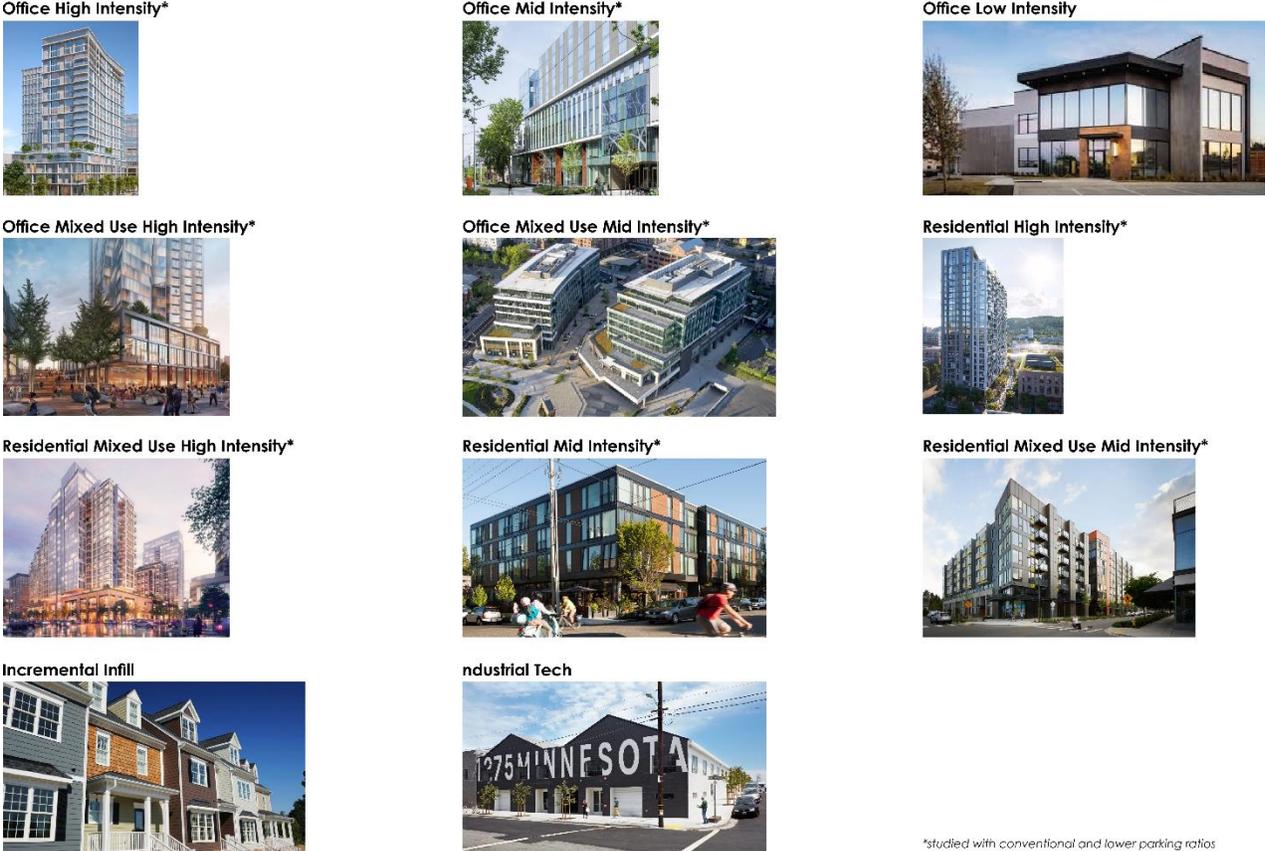


Figure 4. Growth Concept – Action Alternatives

The amount of growth in each alternative was defined using a three-part process. First, the project team built on the findings of the market study to determine what development prototypes would be “Market Feasible”. Second, these development prototypes (Figures 5, 6) were applied to areas of change within the study area, to reflect the initial concepts developed with the community in Summer 2020. This gave an

upper limit to the number of jobs and residential units it would be possible to realize within the Station Area based on the proposed zoning updates. Finally, the top-down growth rates developed in step two were compared against the growth rates of peer geographies to determine what a reasonable growth rate would be to assume for the Kirkland Station Area.

Figure 5. Development Typologies – Action Alternatives



Source: Mithun, 2020.

Figure 6. Development Typology Descriptions

Development Type	Description
Office High Intensity	Primarily office/commercial uses consisting of towers and mid-rise buildings.
Office Mid Intensity	Primarily office/commercial uses consisting of mid-rise buildings.
Office Low Intensity	Primarily office/commercial uses consisting of low-rise buildings.

Office Mixed Use High Intensity	Mix of office/commercial and retail uses consisting of towers and mid-rise buildings.
Office Mixed Use Mid Intensity	Mix of office/commercial and retail uses consisting of mid-rise buildings.
Residential High Intensity	Primarily residential uses consisting of towers and mid-rise buildings.
Residential Mid Intensity	Primarily residential uses consisting of mid-rise buildings.
Residential Mixed High Intensity	Mix of residential and retail uses consisting of towers mid-rise buildings.
Residential Mixed Mid Intensity	Mix of residential and retail uses consisting of towers mid-rise buildings.
Incremental Infill (Residential Infill in Alternative 3)	Primarily residential uses consisting of low-rise buildings, including duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, and small apartment buildings
Other Infill per existing zoning	<p>Where applied in conjunction with low density residential zoning infill would be consistent zoning allowances include KZC Chapter 113, Cottage, Carriage and Two/Three-Unit Homes.</p> <p>Where applied with medium density residential could include a variety of detached and attached residential units depending on underlying zone.</p> <p>Where overlying employment zones, there could be office and retail development or light industrial development consistent with underlying zoning.</p>
Industrial/Tech	Non-residential uses compatible with a light industrial/manufacturing district in a walkable, urban setting. Example uses would include light manufacturing, office, and storefront retail.

Note: For the purposes of these development types, low-rise includes structures up to 3 stories, mid-rise includes structures 4-12 stories and high-rise/towers includes structures above 12 stories.

Alternative 1 – No Action

- Maintains existing zoning and aligned with Comprehensive Plan, neighborhood plans, and other plans.
- Includes WSDOT/ST I-405 and NE 85th St Interchange and Stride BRT Station project which integrates with local transit on NE 85th St and minor streetscape improvements associated with planned projects.
- Alternative 1 allows for the least housing and job growth of each alternative. It contributes to the adopted Comprehensive Plan capacity and would contain about 2,782 dwellings and 10,859 jobs, slightly higher than the 2019 estimates of 1,909 dwellings and 4,988 jobs.

Alternative 2– Guiding Mixed Use Growth

- Allows for moderate growth throughout the district, with mixed use residential and office focus up to 10 stories in existing commercial areas like Rose Hill and

limited infill in established areas. Enhance existing transportation plans including additional bike lanes, sidewalks, and minor green street improvements.

- Alternative 2 would provide for 6,600 new dwellings, and 23,700 new jobs. For the year 2044, the anticipated total growth levels would be up to 8,509 households and 28,688 jobs.

Alternative 3– Transit Oriented Hub

- Allows for additional growth throughout the district, with mixed use residential and office focus up to 20 stories in select commercial areas like Rose Hill, and infill in established areas.
- More substantial multi-modal transportation improvements, coordinated district scale environmental strategies, and signature “blue street” streetscape improvements to treat stormwater.
- Alternative 3 would add capacity for 9,000 new housing units and 30,000 jobs, a substantial addition to the city’s capacity. For the year 2044, the anticipated total growth levels would be up to 10,909 households and 34,988 jobs.

Additional information and exhibits describing the Alternatives is provided in Chapter 1 of the DSEIS pg 1-5 to 1-14: Summary of Objectives and Alternatives (see Attachment 3). More detailed description is provided on pg 2-7 to 2-29: Proposal and Alternatives (see [full DSEIS, available on the project webpage](#))

Summary of Impacts and Progress towards Project Objectives

Alternative 1 – No Action

Project Objective	Degree of Consistency
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unlikely to produce substantial affordable housing. Projected growth of 873 total housing units, implying a maximum of 87 affordable units. (DSEIS pg. 3-42) ▪ Unlikely to improve health equity factors such as access to open space, healthy food, and air quality. ▪ Unlikely to support additional education opportunities (DSEIS pg 3-185) ▪ Unlikely to create new opportunities for community benefits through development
Livability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Likely to maintain current transit, walking, and biking network. ▪ Unlikely to produce Transit Supportive Land-uses: Projected growth does not achieve the PSRC-desired activity units in proximity to the transit investments to meet the Regional Growth Center criterion of 45 activity units per acre. (DSEIS pg. 3-43)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely preserves existing retail jobs. Contributes to the adopted Comprehensive Plan capacity and would contain about 10,859 jobs, slightly higher than the 2019 estimates of 4,988 jobs.
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlikely to reduce the district's carbon footprint. Analysis predicts per capita greenhouse gas emissions of 725.5 Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO_{2e}) over the lifetime of the project, compared to 726 MTCO_{2e} in existing Conditions. (DSEIS Exhibit 1-16)

Alternative 2 – Guiding Mixed Use Growth

Project Objective	Degree of Consistency
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibly would produce some affordable housing and increase housing diversity. There is more opportunity for inclusionary housing and MFTE affordable units under Alternative 2 compared to the No Action Alternative. Together these could total over 900 under the City's existing regulations and potentially more if additional programs or incentives are implemented as described under Mitigation Measures. (DSEIS pg 3-44) Possible to improve health equity factors including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to open space: Onsite open spaces and community gathering spaces are proposed with each Action Alternative, and would be included in the Form-Based Code. (DSEIS pg 3-190) Healthy food: The Action Alternatives would promote policies and regulations that could add parks and open space, including public or private pea patches in new developments (DSEIS pg. 2-14) Air quality: Reduces per capita greenhouse gas emissions and proposes office uses adjacent to the I-405 interchange to buffer residential and mixed uses from the freeway, reducing the potential for localized air quality effects on vulnerable populations Possibly would support additional education opportunities. Alternative 2 includes a height increase at the Lake Washington High School, allowing a 45-foot building(s) above the 30-foot height allowed under the No Action Alternative. This could allow additions of on-site space for classrooms. As well, new schools at all grade levels could be allowed in the Office Mid Intensity and Office Mixed Use Mid Intensity designations, with opportunity to add schools in an urban multistory format. (DSEIS pg 186) Possibly would create new opportunities for community benefits through development linkages
Livability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to encourage walking and biking: This Alternative includes incremental green streets midblock connections policy in Rose Hill, Enhanced bike/pedestrian lane/new sidewalks) on 120th Ave NE and other key streets. (DSEIS Exhibit 1-14) Likely to produce Transit Supportive Land-uses: Exceeds the level of activity units in proximity to the transit investments and would support the Regional Growth Center criterion. (DSEIS pg 3-44) Likely to create new employment opportunities across office, retail, and other sectors.

Alternative 2 would provide for 23,700 new jobs. For the year 2044, the anticipated total growth levels would be up to 28,688 jobs. (DSEIS pg 1-15)

- Sustainability**
- Likely to somewhat lower the district's carbon footprint. Analysis predicts per capita greenhouse gas emissions of 460 Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂e) over the lifetime of the project, compared to 726 MTCO₂e in existing Conditions. (DSEIS Exhibit 1-16)

Alternative 3– Transit Oriented Hub

Project Objective	Degree of Consistency
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Likely to produce significant affordable housing and increase housing diversity. This alternative could achieve more than 1,200 affordable units and potentially more if additional programs or incentives are implemented as described under Mitigation Measures. (DSEIS pg 3-44) ▪ Likely to improve health equity factors including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Access to open space: Onsite open spaces and community gathering spaces are proposed with each Action Alternative in the Form-Based Code. The higher level of development proposed in Alternative 3 would also result in the collection of more park impact fees (DSEIS pg 3-190, 3-191) ▫ Healthy food: The Action Alternatives would promote policies and regulations that could add parks and open space, including public or private pea patches in new developments (DSEIS pg. 2-14) ▫ Air quality: Reduces per capita greenhouse gas emissions and proposes office uses adjacent to the I-405 interchange to buffer residential and mixed uses from the freeway, reducing the potential for localized air quality effects on vulnerable populations ▪ Likely to support additional education opportunities through the collection of school impact fees, raising heights at the Lake Washington High School to allow additional school capacity in the future, and exploring opportunities to incorporate space for schools into new development (DSEIS pg 3-190, 3-192) ▪ Likely to create new opportunities for community benefits through development linkages
Livability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Likely to encourage walking and biking. Required green streets midblock connections policy in in Rose Hill, substantial bike/ped improvements (cycle track network, retail supportive streetscape) on 120th Ave NE and other key streets. Green streets include both non-vehicular and vehicular streets that provide public access through large sites. (DSEIS Exhibit 1-15) ▪ Extremely likely to produce Transit Supportive Land-uses: Action Alternative 3 exceeds the level of activity units in proximity to the transit investments to meet the Regional Growth Center criterion for the Study Area when only a portion of the proposed Center is considered. (DSEIS pg 3-44) ▪ Likely to create new employment opportunities across office, retail, and other sectors. Adds 30,000 jobs, a substantial addition to the city's capacity. For the year 2044, the anticipated



total growth levels would be up to 34,988 jobs. (DSEIS pg 1-15)

- Sustainability ■ Likely to significantly lower the district's carbon footprint. Analysis predicts per capita greenhouse gas emissions of 410 Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂e) over the lifetime of the project, compared to 726 MTCO₂e in existing Conditions. (DSEIS Exhibit 1-16)
- District scale environmental strategies maximize environmental performance through green infrastructure and districtwide green building standards/ incentives.

NE 85th Street Station Area Plan

Report on the Public Open House held January 7, 2021

Executive Summary

As part of the DSEIS comment period for the NE 85th Street Station Area Plan which spans January 5th through February 5th, the City of Kirkland held a live, online public open house on January 7, 2021, to introduce the concepts and alternatives studied to improve understanding of the choices being considered. Participation in the zoom meeting was robust, estimated at about 140 participants compared to the previous workshop which had about 80 participants, and typical City in-person open house of about 30-45 participants. Presentation included an overview of the DSEIS process and commenting, a summary of the three Alternatives studied, their alignment with project objectives and evaluation, and next steps toward a Preferred Alternative which will likely be a combination of features from multiple alternatives. Small group discussion followed the presentation. Common themes and priorities from these discussions included desire for open space, bike, and pedestrian connections; strong support for better transit and mobility connections with the new BRT and potential Houghton P&R connections; importance of more affordable housing opportunities; desire to focus density around transit and concerns about transitions between higher density areas and adjacent neighborhoods; questions around the balance of jobs/housing as well as balance of new development and required infrastructure and services; and concerns and questions about traffic impacts. After group discussion, Q&A lasted for about 15 minutes, which primarily revolved around questions related to process and participation. The meeting ended with a summary on how and where to comment, ask questions, how to participate in the survey, and a reminder to submit comments by February 5th at 5 p.m. by postal or electronic mail.

Meeting Purpose

The City of Kirkland held a live, online public open house to introduce the community to the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the NE 85th Street Station Area Plan. The comment period of the DSEIS opened on January 5th and will close on February 5th to provide an opportunity for all interested parties to submit comments on three draft alternatives for the plan. Given the technical nature of the DSEIS document, the City held a meeting early in the comment period to introduce the concepts and alternatives studied to improve understanding of the choices being considered. A recording of the open house and the presentation slide deck will be available on the City's website for people who were unable to attend. This allows anyone interested in the plan access to this information and benefit from the summary and explanatory information.

Participation

There was robust participation in the meeting, estimated at about 140 participants. Outreach to notify the community about the engagement period and the public meeting began in December 2020. The meeting was conducted over zoom, and there were 122 zoom accounts that participated in the meeting.¹ However the number of participants was higher, as several accounts included multiple participants.



Meeting Agenda

The meeting began with a presentation by City staff and the project team. Adam Weinstein, Director of Planning, gave an overview of the project and its purpose. Becca Book of Mithun introduced participants to meeting protocols, including tips on effectively using the zoom platform and meeting ground rules and the overall planning process. Lisa Grueter of BERK Consulting explained the overall process for the DSEIS and how to submit comments. Brad Barnett of Mithun summarized the three alternatives that were studied, highlighting areas of similarity and contrast. Erin Ishizaki of Mithun presented an evaluation of the alternatives and their consistency with overall project and community goals.

At the conclusion of the presentation, participants joined small group discussions for about 30-40 minutes in virtual breakout rooms. Facilitators, which included City staff and consultant team members, supported these discussions and took live notes using the Miro platform. The Miro platform was set up to provide visuals and other support materials, as would be available to participants in a traditional open-house setting. Facilitators took notes on participant comments using virtual “sticky-notes.” A sample tableau of the materials available in each virtual breakout room is shown in the following image:

¹ City of Kirkland representatives and members of the consulting team were not included in this number.

Discussion Group Questions	Discussion Group Responses								
1. Introduce yourself, what makes your community special? What would you like to preserve for future generations?									
2. How do you envision this neighborhood in 20 years? Which elements of the alternatives shared today align with this vision?									
3. Which elements from the alternatives measures best achieve the project goal of creating an equitable, livable, and sustainable Kirkland? Which do not?									
4. Out of the Future Community Characteristics, which are your top 3?									
5. Which, if any, of the mitigation measures described would you like to see incorporated in the preferred alternative?									

SIGN IN SHEET:

- Allison Zike, City of Kirkland
- Genick
- Cory
- Mark
- Ryan
- Jann
- Michelle
- Scott

Misc. Questions/Comments
 Allison, 16 hours ago

Community Characteristics:

- Creating and preserving public open space
- Ease and safety of travel by walking, biking, and transit
- Ease of travel in private vehicles
- Limited building heights and densities
- More affordable housing
- More jobs in Kirkland
- More green buildings and features
- Preservation of neighborhood character
- Support for local businesses, existing and new
- The ability for people from all walks of life to live in Kirkland

Example Mitigation Measures

Element	Proposed Measure Highlights
Housing/Land Use / Aesthetics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Require more affordable housing units beyond 10% existing inclusionary housing regulations Provide new incentives to developers to develop more affordable housing Allow developers to pay an in-lieu fee if fewer affordable units are constructed than planned Participate in regional efforts to leverage funding Design standards for compatible development and transitions to existing neighborhoods Focus on higher buildings near the interchange, with lower height buildings to transition into the surrounding neighborhoods
Environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Create vegetated buffers between heavily trafficked areas and residential development to help improve air quality, provide an riparian, reduce tree cover Offer incentives, or requirements for green building to improve air quality and stormwater
Transportation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Add capital improvements to roads to accommodate cars (e.g. add travel lanes, turn lanes, signals) Improve transit and pedestrian networks Incentivize transit and ride sharing Alter parking standards such as altered parking ratios, managed on-street parking Change the land use mix to better use existing and planned infrastructure Alter policies to balance available infrastructure capacity, funding, and availability of other modes of travel.

Alternative Summary

Alternative	Description	Development Typologies	Development Typology Map	Maximum Allowable Building Heights	Mobility
Alternative 1: No Action	Reflects existing zoning and current plans. It makes no planning changes to accommodate projected growth.				
Alternative 2: Guiding Transit Oriented Growth	Allows moderate growth around transit, primarily focused on existing commercial areas such as Rose Hill.				
Alternative 3: Transit Oriented Hub	Allows most growth to support transit-oriented development, primarily focused on existing commercial areas such as Rose Hill.				

After participants introduced themselves in their small groups, facilitators led discussion of five questions:

- What makes your community special? What would you like to preserve for future generations?
- How do you envision this neighborhood in 20 years? Which elements of the alternatives shared today align with this vision?
- Which elements from the alternatives measures best achieve the project goal of creating an equitable, livable, and sustainable Kirkland? Which do not?
- Out of the Future Community Characteristics, which are your top 3?
- Which, if any, of the mitigation measures described would you like to see incorporated in the preferred alternative?

At the conclusion of the discussion groups, participants were asked to submit their three top ideas for the NE 85th Street Station Area plan. This generated the following word cloud on the following page.²

² Although instructed to provide three single-word answers (or to hyphenate a phrase to create a compound word such as "Alternative-3," some participants submitted a string of text, resulting in high amount of visual static in the word cloud.

- Lower growth seems appropriate for the west side of the interchange and higher growth seems appropriate for the east side of the interchange.
- Desire to balance growth with mobility, infrastructure and service needs. Moderate growth is a compromise.
- Form of growth and density should provide quality of life with open spaces and views.
- Strong desire to keep housing away from I-405 due to noise and air quality.

Land Use and Zoning

- It's worthwhile to plan for better utilization of this area.
- New development is concentrated in the west, but few improvements are identified for the east.
- Center density around the transportation hub. Good TOD development will reduce traffic impacts.
- What makes this area a destination? Ensure it is a destination for the region.
- Support single-family neighborhoods.
- Create child-friendly neighborhoods where housing has play areas and parks that are easy to walk to.
- Ensure views are preserved.
- High rises support more population vertically and prevent sprawl.
- Integrate density with transit opportunities to get rid of auto-dependence.
- Add mixed use to existing commercial areas.
- Use townhouses to achieve medium densities.
- Could the light industrial areas near the Cross-Kirkland-Corridor be changed to residential?
- Ensure that there are amenities and parks to make densities and smaller living spaces livable – integrate green spaces with new development.
- Form based zoning is a good approach.
- Require sustainable development, LEED.
- This area needs to be optimized for people.
- Do not place housing near the highway.
- Zone to leverage investment in transit.
- Ensure the integration of public art.
- Create a unified design theme and public gateways.
- Focus on infill housing instead of large complexes.

Housing

- Importance of preserving affordability in the community- both market rate and subsidized.

- Increase the diversity of housing in this area: missing middle, mixed use, etc.
- What are the effects of bringing low income housing into this area on existing homes?
- Will new housing displace existing residents by raising taxes?
- 10% provision does not create enough affordable housing. Hold developers to more.
- Housing needs daycares and other amenities like play areas, open spaces, and access to parks.

Transportation and Parking

- Traffic is already a concern in the 85th street corridor and adding new growth will make it worse.
- Consider diverting traffic to 87th and put the crossing with 114th there.
- Making biking feasible. Is there adequate ROW space to support safe biking? Particularly in neighborhoods?
- Making walking feasible. Add greenspaces for safety and widen sidewalks. More midblock pedestrian connections.
- Connect to the Cross Kirkland Corridor.
- Google expansion will affect residential streets.
- Green street should be at: 120th, near the high school, near the women and children's center
- More people and less parking will not work in this area.
- How will construction impacts to 85th be mitigated during development?
- Address the dead end streets near Costco.
- Connect Houghton P&R to this area via bus connections and walking / biking trails.
- Is 80th street wide enough?
- Need to move people up/down hill on 85th to connect downtown to the station.
- Buses get stuck in traffic too – need dedicated transit lanes.
- BRT is not as impactful on transportation habits as light rail.
- Address pass through and cut through traffic.

Environment and Open Space

- Preserving wetlands and the ecosystem is a priority.
- More open spaces are needed in these alternatives – and more access to nature.
- Restore native plants to this area.
- Address the increase in noise.
- Preserve and add tree canopy.
- Address climate change.
- Desire for open space, bike, and pedestrian connections

- Ensure that there are amenities and parks to make densities and smaller living spaces livable – integrate green spaces with new development.
- Create child-friendly neighborhoods where housing has play areas and parks that are easy to walk to.

Economic Development and Employment

- A full range of employment is needed. Are the jobs anticipated to be service jobs? Office jobs?
- Does this area need 30,000 jobs?
- It's important to plan for new jobs from Google and other major employers in this area.
- Is the jobs-housing balance right? Are there enough jobs to support the proposed housing?
- Reduce commercial development in this area in favor of greening the area.
- Costco doesn't fit with the plans for this area.

Neighborhoods

- Highland neighborhood should not be connected to 405 in the future.
- Neighborhoods should not be pressured to change.

Services and Infrastructure

- How will needed capital investments be supported?
- What are impacts on schools?
- What will be the impact on crime?

Overall process concerns and questions

- The process should include significant outreach efforts and follow the established outreach plan.
- Questions regarding what outreach was conducted especially postcards and mailers
- Project team should update public on progress toward outreach plan
- Questions about when public can comment and how that relates to decision making
- New website is not user friendly and previous plans and EIS documents need to be added back.
- Better coordination with Sound Transit.