



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, Planning & Building Director

Date: March 5, 2020

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

Staff Recommendation

Review project introduction and process overview memorandum (see Attachment 1) prepared by [Mithūn](#), the City's lead consultant for the project, and discuss key topics for continued preparation of the Opportunities and Challenges analysis. Topics for Council discussion are:

1. Key issues that should be explored through alternatives development for the station area planning;
2. The level of evaluating potential development or land transfer that should be conducted for the surplus land from the cloverleaf within the current WSDOT right-of-way; and,
3. Project approach to inclusion and equity, including the public outreach plan.

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 hiring a multi-disciplinary design and planning team to help develop a SAP meeting the many goals for this City priority project.

A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the design work was issued in August of 2019. City staff conducted interviews with several highly qualified urban design firms in October of 2019. After a competitive selection process, the Seattle-based urban design firm, Mithūn, was selected to lead the project for the City. Mithūn's selection was based on the highly competent project management and subconsultant teams they bring to the project, their focus on urban design, the excellent work they have produced locally and internationally, the high regard of their previous clients, and their innovative process and project approach.

In addition to the budget for the project allocated by City Council, 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 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Form-based Codes 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 foster vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods, help create effective transitions between high and low intensity land uses and establish standards for quality public spaces within the Station Area. The Department of Commerce grant will also help the community visualize – using graphics and other tools – how new development in the Station Area will look and feel.

Next Steps

City staff and the Mithun team will be attending several City Council meetings over the course of the project to discuss key decisions and receive direction. At this time, the next Council study session is tentatively scheduled for May 2020 to discuss final findings from the opportunities and constraints analysis and to present preliminary concepts developed in response to those findings.

Attachments:

1. Station Area Plan – Project Introduction and Process Overview Memorandum, prepared by Mithūn, dated March 6, 2020

cc: File Number CAM20-00153



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Memorandum

To:	Allison Zike, Senior Planner	Date:	March 11, 2020
From:	Becca Book, Mithun	Project #:	1930000
cc:		Project:	I-405 and NE 85 th ST BRT Station Area Planning
Re:	Station Area Plan - Project Introduction and Process Overview		

Recommendation

The attached documents and accompanying presentation provide updates on the Initial Opportunities and Challenges the team has analyzed for the Station Area Planning efforts. The team is looking for feedback on:

1. any key issues that should be explored through alternatives development for the station area planning,
2. the focus of the station area plan will not focus on the interchange itself, but on the city of Kirkland land and the surplus land from the cloverleaf within the current WSDOT Right of Way. The land within the WSDOT Right of Way will be considered separately, but the team is seeking confirmation from council that we should continue evaluating this area for potential development or transfer as part of this project,
3. and Project approach to inclusion and equity, including the public outreach plan.

Background

ST3 is bringing a once-in-a-generation transit investment to Kirkland with a new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station at 85th and I-405 by 2024. The BRT station, developed by Sound Transit, will connect Kirkland to the Link Light Rail at Bellevue and the Lynnwood Transit Center. To facilitate efficient bus service, WSDOT is developing an innovative triple-level interchange that will replace the existing clover leaf at I-405 and NE 85th St. The City of Kirkland's Station Area Plan (SAP) will consider changes to zoning and other policies and regulations to encourage transit-oriented development near the station and leverage this regional investment to create the most value and quality of life for Kirkland.

The Station Area Plan will help shape an equitable and sustainable Transit Oriented Community as part of the continued growth expected in Downtown Kirkland. The project will evaluate the feasibility of various types of development within ½ mile of the station and consider changes to zoning and other regulations. The team will study opportunities to maximize the public benefit from future development, including affordable housing, open space, desired employment and job types. Using the City's Vision and Goals and the 2035 Comprehensive Plan as a foundation, the SAP is an important opportunity to advance concepts in the Downtown Kirkland Urban Center proposal and to support citywide sustainability and housing goals.

In the initial phase of the project, the team has developed a public participation plan and begun outreach to key stakeholders. Currently, the team is developing an Opportunities and Challenges Report, including review of previous plans, studies and existing conditions information from the City and other agencies, to identify key questions to explore as SAP alternatives are developed. After the first phase is completed, the team will develop alternatives to explore a variety of development, mobility, transit integration and access, and other urban design opportunities for the station area. After evaluation, a preferred alternative will be identified and developed to form the basis for our SEIS Environmental Review. This preferred alternative will be articulated with a set of resources including a site plan, 3D massing, analysis of environmental

factors, and circulation networks, that describe the design intent of the plan and coordinate with the development review process. This will include a form-based code, which will illustrate and inform the physical form and urban design characteristics of the station area plan. These qualities will be essential to a successful Station Area Plan. This work will culminate in a Final Station Area Plan. (See *Schedule in Attachment 1*)

Guiding Principles and Project Approach

The following principles will guide all phases of the project, including outreach activities and technical activities such as the Opportunities & Challenges Report.

1. The Station Area Plan will look to existing plans for guidance and will work to realize the vision and goals established in the Comprehensive Plan process. The SAP will use a planning framework to support the Kirkland 2035 Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement of 'we are respectful, fair and inclusive'.
2. The Station Area Plan will consider changes in land use, urban design, transportation, infrastructure/utilities, economic development and sustainability changes within ½ mile of the I-405 / NE 85th St BRT. The final study area boundary will be established as part of the Initial Opportunities and Challenges Analysis Report. Considering the impacts on schools, school capacities, and/or integrating school facilities into redevelopment activities will be a primary focus of the plan.
3. Potential development or other changes within the WSDOT Interchange Right of Way will be explored as part of this project, with clear callouts for actions or alternatives that would require changes to the WSDOT ROW beyond what is included in the ST / WSDOT Project.
4. The proposed alternatives will be informed by the data driven analysis and public input shared with City Council and Staff in the Opportunities and Analysis Report, and then synthesized into 3 alternatives for the station area. Alternatives will be key tools for eliciting further feedback from the diverse population groups impacted by the station area plan in workshops and design charettes.
5. As part of this process, the team will coordinate with ongoing City equity efforts to provide opportunities for meaningful participation to all populations affected by the plan, and to incorporate the priorities of low-income populations, communities of color, and limited-English speaking residents.
6. Station Area alternatives will be tested against the project goals of creating a livable, workable, equitable, and sustainable Transit Oriented Community (TOC) in the City of Kirkland that supports high capacity transit investment at the new BRT station and throughout the region, along with additional technical analysis and evaluation
7. Reports, technical guidance in the form of zoning or other regulatory changes, design guidelines, and implementation strategies will be produced to aid City staff in the development review process and support ongoing planning efforts by the City and others. These resources will be highly graphic and authored in accessible language to help stakeholders understand the intent of the plan.

Opportunities & Challenges Analysis Progress

The first phase of work includes an Opportunities & Challenges Report. The purpose of this report is to build a shared understanding of the issues, opportunities, and challenges associated with a transit-oriented community in the study area. This report will focus primarily on a technical analysis, with insights gathered during the parallel engagement process incorporated as available. The final report is intended to be completed by the end of March, with a summary of preliminary findings as part of the March 17 presentation to City Council.

To date, this analysis has included a variety of activities:

- **Review of previous plans**, including 2015 Kirkland Comprehensive Plan, 2018 City of Kirkland General Sewer Plan, WSDOT 15% Design Documentation for the I-405/85th project, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Priority Habitats and Species Database, City of Kirkland Active Transportation Plan (update underway), 2015 Kirkland Transportation Master Plan, nearby Neighborhood Plans, Kirkland Zoning Code
- **Interviews** with stakeholders including City Council, City Staff, Neighborhood leaders, and stakeholders familiar with local real estate market dynamics (*See Attachment 2*)
- **Technical Analysis** of relevant datasets, including land use, development patterns, mobility networks, environmental conditions, demographics, and equity and health metrics

This Opportunities and Challenges Analysis will be structured to highlight key themes emerging across topic areas and formatted as a highly graphic report that focuses attention on key takeaways that can inform outreach and engagement, station area alternatives development, as well as coordination with other agencies active in the station area. As noted in the summary, the team is requesting feedback from Council on any key issues or questions that should be explored in alternatives development.

85th interchange TOD feasibility

The Station Area Plan led by the City is a distinct project from the BRT Station and Interchange projects led by ST and WSDOT; yet areas of overlap and coordination will be critical. As stated above, the intent for the SAP is to explore potential development or other changes within the WSDOT Right of Way, with clear callouts for actions or alternatives that would require additional changes to the WSDOT ROW beyond what is indicated in the ST/WSDOT project. As part of ongoing coordination with that project, the City submitted comments on the 15% drawings relevant to TOD opportunities. Key topics include preserving area for potential development sites within the former clover leaf, and relocating the stormwater detention facility.

Agency responses indicated that TOD feasibility study would likely need to occur through another process or timeline similar to the Kingsgate TOD. The team is seeking guidance from the Council as to how best to facilitate coordination between these two efforts and advance the potential of TOD. Exploring these opportunities further will be dependent on the City's willingness to engage the State on administrative and legislative changes necessary to facilitate development within the WSDOT ROW (highlighted in green in the below graphic).



Public Involvement and Outreach

The initial outreach conducted during the Opportunities and Challenges phase of the project aims to inform and educate participants about the BRT station and Station Area Plan and to collect information about existing conditions, station area opportunities, and challenges that can inform design alternatives. This will be accomplished by gathering input from stakeholders with the closest ties to the station area itself including the agencies responsible for the station and interchange, residents and businesses located nearest the station, and community members outside the Station Area with an interest or stake in City-wide development.

To support the Kirkland 2035 Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement of 'we are respectful, fair and inclusive' the team is using an established planning framework to guide the project approach: King County's EIR and supporting tools. The team is completing an Equity Impact Review using the guidelines developed by the King County Equity Team to identify, evaluate and communicate the potential impact – both positive and negative - that the SAP may have on equity. (See Attachment 3: Equity) As part of the Opportunities and Challenges Analysis phase, the team has identified groups that may be affected by the SAP, and the determinants of equity that will be used to monitor the projects progress towards achieving equity goals.

As the Alternatives Analysis process begins, a design charrette will provide an important avenue for "designing in public" with local stakeholders. Workshops, open houses, and other formats will be scheduled to review initial and refined alternatives and incorporate feedback into the project. These large-format events will allow the project team to learn about affected communities', employees', and/or stakeholders' priorities and concerns, and prioritize alternatives that will have a positive and equitable effects.

85th SAP – Equity Impact Review

As a regional and city-wide project, it is essential that the Station Area Plan (SAP) provide meaningful participation and opportunities - at local/neighborhood and city-wide geographies - to influence the decision-making of the project. Per the Kirkland 2035 Vision Statement, "Civic engagement, innovation and diversity are highly valued. We are respectful, fair, and inclusive." In order to support an equitable project process and outcomes, the project team will strive to reach all communities affected by the project – those living and working there now, and in the future. The public outreach plan will include multiple opportunities, venues, and ways to participate throughout the planning process to reach stakeholders from all walks of life.

The team recommends aligning the project approach to equity with the Equity Impact Review (EIR)¹ and tools developed by King County to identify, evaluate, and communicate the potential impact - both positive and negative – of the Station Area Planning efforts. This process merges empirical data and community engagement findings to evaluate the impact of planning efforts on environmental justice, equitable access, and the stewardship of public investments that serve residents, visitors, commuters, businesses, and employees. In each of the five stages of the EIR process, summarized below, established King County equity tools will help promote equity within the three frameworks defined by the King County Equity Team in the EIR:

- **Distributional** — Fair and just distribution of benefits and burdens to all affected parties and communities across the community and organizational landscape.
- **Procedural** — Inclusive, open and fair access by all stakeholders to decision processes that impact community and operational outcomes. Process equity relies on all affected parties having access to and meaningful experience with civic and employee engagement, public participation, and jurisdictional listening.
- **Cross-generational**— Effects of current actions on the fair and just distribution of benefits and burdens to future generations of communities and employees. Examples include income and wealth, health outcomes, white privilege, resource depletion, climate change and pollution, real estate redlining practices, and species extinction².

Phase 1: Scope. Identify who will be affected.

- Throughout the public outreach process, the team will consider who is affected by our actions, and how to incorporate them into the decision-making process. Particular attention is given to how to provide meaningful opportunities for participation for the priorities of low-income populations, communities of color, and limited-English speaking residents.
- The team has identified the following preliminary list of affected parties to include in ongoing outreach:
 - Employees who work within the Study Area (½ mile from the station) for a variety of businesses and public institutions
 - Lake Washington High School students
 - Rose Hill Elementary School Students
 - Employees who work within 1 mile from the station for a variety of businesses and public institutions

¹ King County Executive. *Equity & Social Justice Tools and Resources*.

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/tools-resources.aspx>

² 2015 Equity Impact Review Process Overview. https://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/2016/The_Equity_Impact_Review_checklist_Mar2016.ashx?la=en

- Transit users accessing the BRT to travel to points north and south
- Clients of Kirkland's new adult women and family shelter
- Residents within the Station Area
- Future Residents and Employees - Individuals seeking housing or employment within Kirkland
- Special efforts will be made to include vulnerable populations within the study area. These include: minority residents (20%), limited English speakers (5%), seniors (23%), youth, (19%), households experiencing poverty (6%), and renters (36%)
- Kirkland residents, employees, and employers who live and/or work outside of the Station Area but have a stake or interest in city-wide development decisions

Phase 2: Assess equity and community context.

- Workshops and Design Charrettes will be used as an opportunity to engage affected communities, employees, and/or stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and learn about their priorities and concerns. The Public Outreach and Participation Plan will be reviewed to assess whether alternate engagement methods, venues, etc are desired to reach affected populations (above)
- The team will assess the following Determinants of Equity and explore how they are impacted by various alternatives throughout the planning process. The team will use quantitative data to identify disparities potential equity related outcomes of the planning process. Below is a preliminary list of metrics, that will be developed for the report, and the proposed metric to quantify impacts in this area.
 - **Housing** – Average Housing and Transportation Costs as a Percentage of Income
 - **Early Childhood Development**- Median Child Care Cost as Percent of Annual Income by Race
 - **Education** - On-Time High School Graduation Rates; Student to Teacher Ratios.
 - **Job Training and Jobs** - Living Wage Gap; demographics of employees in the study area; travel times by race for employees in the study area
 - **Health and Human Services** – Obesity
 - **Food Systems** - Percent of Students with Free or Reduced Lunch
 - **Parks and Natural Resources** - Park Accessibility
 - **Healthy Built and Natural Environment** – Air Pollution; Noise levels
 - **Transportation** – Walk and Bike Score
 - **Community Economic Development** – % Rent versus Own
 - **Neighborhoods** – Residential Mobility
 - **Community and Public Safety** – Crime Rate
 - **Law and Justice** – Incarceration Rate

Phase 3: Analysis and decision process.

- As preliminary concepts and alternatives for the SAP are developed, the team will consider how variations in development, mobility, transit integration and access, and other urban design considerations will affect community and employee priorities and concerns. The City should explore how decision-making processes can provide more representation to affected communities.
- During Alternatives Analysis, the team will evaluate who will be disproportionately burdened or benefit in each alternative. Projecting and mapping equitable outcomes will help prioritize alternatives.

Phase 4: Implement. Are you staying connected with communities and employees?

- The team will develop materials and graphics to help the City of Kirkland communicate with communities, stakeholders and employees about the implementation and potential impacts of the SAP.
- The SAP will incorporate “pro-equity” opportunities when possible, for example selecting Minority/ Women-owned Business Enterprises for contracting and materials sourcing and opportunities for affected communities to actively participate in leadership and implementation.
- The SAP will create a measurement and evaluation system for the Station Area Plan in collaboration with affected communities and include a mechanism to identify unintended consequences.

Phase 5: Ongoing Learning. Listen, adjust, and co-learn with communities and employees.

- The Opportunities and Challenges Analysis Report will provide a baseline equity assessment, which will be used to develop the project approach to equity, including the public participation plan. These may be adjusted after the assessment is completed, or later in the project timeline.
- The City of Kirkland is encouraged to continue conversations with the community regarding the Station Area. Ongoing communication will allow the city to adjust planning efforts as the community's priorities and concerns shift.

Next Steps

- 3/31/2020: Initial Opportunities and Challenges Analysis Report Completed
- 3/2020-06/2020: Alternatives Developed
- 06/2020-11/2020: Alternatives Analyzed, Preferred Alternative Developed
- 6/2020 – 5/2021: Environmental review/ EIS Development
- 11/2020-2/2021: Form-based standards developed
- 7/2021: Final Station Area Plan

Presentation Outline

The following topics will be covered in our March 17 Presentation:

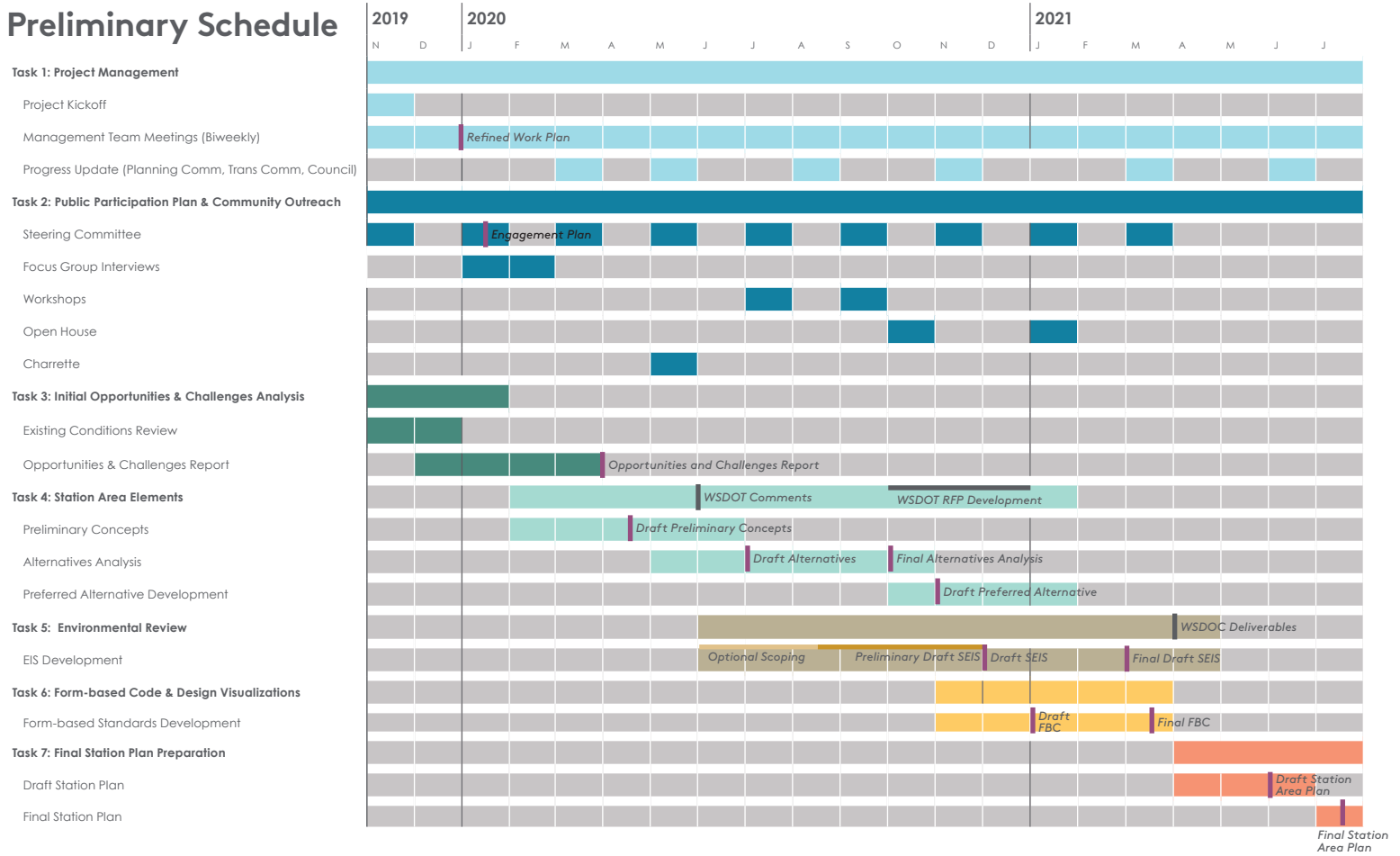
- Overview & Context
- TOD Precedents
- Equity Approach and Assessment
- Opportunities & Challenges
 - Development Near Transit
 - Connected Kirkland
 - Integrated Station

Attachments

Attachment 1: Schedule

Attachment 2: Opportunities & Challenges Phase Engagement

Preliminary Schedule



Opportunities & Challenges Phase Engagement

Kirkland NE 85th Station Area Plan

The purpose of the opportunities and challenges phase of the project is to inform and educate participants about the BRT station and station area plan and to collect information about existing conditions, station area opportunities, and challenges that can inform design alternatives. This will be accomplished by gathering input from stakeholders with the closest ties to the station area itself including the agencies responsible for the station and interchange, as well as residents and businesses located nearest the station. To begin to gather citywide perspectives in this exploratory phase, engagement with Kirkland's appointed boards and commissions will help to better understand a broader context.

This document identifies which types of outreach and engagement methods the team will use to gather input for this phase of the project. It outlines who is responsible for developing materials and conducting engagements and the steps necessary to proceed. Project and phase goals for engagement are also listed, with an explanation of how the goals will be implemented.

Goals

Goal	Implementation
Communicate clearly about purpose and process so the community is well informed about the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish communication tools for the project starting with this phase, including a project website and one-page handout with project information. The consultant team will suggest content for the City to put on its website. They will also prepare a draft and final informational handout for City review. Consider the match between engagement personnel and stakeholder to ensure the easiest exchange of information.
Actively solicit information from businesses, residents, and property owners about their questions, priorities, and concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This phase focuses on engagement with businesses and residents closest to the station to provide context for the development of concepts and alternatives in the next phase. Citywide context will be provided from discussions with boards and commissions. Regional context will be provided from the agencies working on station development.
Apply an equity lens to seek the perspectives of those who may be unlikely or unable to participate in the process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of engagement methods will be used to gather information and meet the needs of participants. Prior to the end of this phase, the project team will assess success in gathering input from a variety of community members and refocus efforts as needed.

Goal	Implementation
Focus engagement around issues that can be molded and influenced by public input.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants will receive information about the project with the purpose of distinguishing the City's station area plan from Sound Transit's station design effort. Engagement personnel will explain the scope of this project and the types of opportunities and concerns that the City is able to explore. When participants express opportunities and concerns outside the scope of this project, they will be noted and redirected. If applicable, some information may be forwarded to appropriate personnel outside this project.
Integrate plan development with environmental review to ensure a seamless experience for participants and multiple opportunities to comment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement during this phase will be the first opportunity to comment for businesses and residents close to the station area. Environmental review will not begin in this data gathering stage.
Ensure that those most affected by the plan are aware and engaged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This phase focuses on engagement with businesses and residents closest to the station to provide context for the development of concepts and alternatives in the next phase.
Identify areas of opportunity and concern.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement questions are designed to identify areas of opportunity or concern: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picture the area around the BRT station in 20 years: How has it changed to make the most of the state and regional investment in the station? Has it helped Kirkland achieve any community goals? What are the advantages of the BRT station at NE 85th Street for local residents, businesses, and property owners? What are the disadvantages of the BRT station at NE 85th Street for local residents, businesses, and property owners? Who else should we talk to? How do we best reach them?

Outreach and Engagement

The following outreach and engagement is proposed for each of the stakeholder groups below.

Stakeholder	Outreach	Engagement	Notes
Neighborhood groups: North Rose Hill, South Rose Hill, Highlands, Everest, Moss Bay, Norkirk.	Reach out to neighborhood association chairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighborhood leaders meeting Conducted February 19, 2020. See Key takeaways below. 	Try to host a neighborhood meeting that draws the chairs from all six neighborhoods. If not possible, visit meetings for individual neighborhoods. Either approach would include City staff and members of the consulting team.
Business Community: businesses within half	Send a postcard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short online survey ongoing 	Send a postcard with contact information for an interview and links to an online survey on

Attachment 2

Stakeholder	Outreach	Engagement	Notes
a mile of the station area.	Business canvas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business canvas. Phone interviews. 	<p>the project webpage. Based on results, consider a business canvas teaming a person from the consulting team with someone from the City.</p> <p>Consultant team will prepare a postcard for the City to send. Consultant team will prepare draft and final survey questions for City approval and host the survey. City staff will post the survey to the project webpage.</p>
Major property owners within a half-mile of the station area.	Calls and emails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phone interviews. 	Major property owners/businesses in the study area should be offered interviews. Consider the personnel match between interviewer and interviewee.
State and regional agencies.	Contact project lead for BRT station and design to ask for time on a meeting agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project meeting. 	This engagement will focus more on sharing information about the City's planning process, with some coordination of effort. Best led by City staff, possibly with consultant support.
Boards and Commissions.	Contact chairs and liaisons to secure time on a meeting agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board or Commission meeting. 	This is best led by City staff with some consultant support.

Next Steps

	2/03	2/10	2/17	2/24	3/2	3/9	3/16
Outreach							
Engagement							
Reporting							