

NE 85TH ST STATION AREA PLAN

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)

Categories: I-405/ NE 85th Interchange and Sound Transit BRT Station; Station Area Plan; Parking; Process

I-405/NE 85th St Interchange and Sound Transit Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Station

- 1. Does the study area for the Station Area Plan include the new interchange and the new BRT station at I-405 & NE 85th Street?**

No. The City's Station Area Plan project is a distinctly separate project from the new interchange and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station being developed by Sound Transit and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) as a part of Sound Transit's ST3 Regional Transit System Plan. The Station Area plan was initiated by the City to leverage the regional investment in transit to create the most value and quality of life for Kirkland and will focus on the area outside of the WSDOT right-of-way. For more information about the planned BRT station, visit the Sound Transit project website at: <https://www.soundtransit.org/system-expansion/i-405-brt>.

- 2. When will construction on the new interchange and BRT station begin? When will it be complete?**

A new interchange will be constructed at I-405 and NE 85th St. Construction is currently scheduled to begin construction in 2022 and the new BRT line is planned to be operational at the station by 2025. Please visit the Sound Transit website discussing project timelines at: <https://www.soundtransit.org/system-expansion/i-405-brt/timeline-milestones>.

- 3. Are there plans for new parking lots or structures around the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station? Will there be enough parking for people who use the station?**

Sound Transit's plans for the interchange and BRT station do not include a Park and Ride. The plan does include a new pick-up/drop-off lot in place of the abandoned northwest cloverleaf quadrant within the WSDOT right-of-way that will be accessed from NE 87th Street in the Highlands Neighborhood. See the below FAQ section on parking for more information about how the Station Area Plan will address parking within the Station Area.

- 4. How will pedestrians and cyclists travel through the reconstructed interchange on NE 85th Street?**

The middle level of the new interchange will include sidewalks for pedestrians and cyclists to travel through the interchange, including access to and from the BRT station platforms and local bus stops. You can view a [Sound Transit and WSDOT presentation to the Kirkland Transportation Commission](#) from March 2019 to see preliminary designs for the station.

- 5. How will road noise and construction noise from the interchange be mitigated?**

Noise from I-405 and interchange construction is being studied as part of the environmental review for the interchange project. WSDOT performed noise analysis according to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requirements. There are existing noise walls adjacent to I-405 and in the interchange area. The location and height of these walls is based on analysis

conducted for earlier projects on I-405. Relocation of a portion of the wall in the southwest quadrant within the WSDOT right-of-way, which is required to construct the interchange, was included in the noise analysis for the I-405/NE 85th Street Interchange and Inline BRT Station Project.

Questions or comments regarding the interchange project or BRT station can be addressed to the Sound Transit and WSDOT by emailing the following contacts:

Mary Mackie (WSDOT): MackieM@consultant.wsdot.wa.gov

Ivonne Rivera (ST): ivonne.riveramartinez@soundtransit.org

City of Kirkland Station Area Plan

1. What is the Station Area Plan?

The City of Kirkland's Station Area Plan will look at how development, open space, and mobility connections within approximately a half-mile of the BRT station can leverage this regional investment to create the most value and quality of life for Kirkland, and provide the community with an opportunity to envision the future for this area. The Station Area Plan will encourage an equitable and sustainable transit-oriented community, including promoting affordable housing, as part of the significant growth expected in Greater Downtown Kirkland. It will build on recent efforts such as the Kirkland 2035 Comprehensive Plan, the Greater Downtown Kirkland Urban Center proposal, and other city-wide initiatives addressing housing, mobility, and sustainability. See the project website at www.kirklandwa.gov/stationareaplan for the boundaries of the study area and more background information.

2. When will the Station Area plan be built?

Construction, or “build out”, of the Station Area is not funded by or included in this plan. The final Station Area Plan will provide a policy and visual framework for the long-term future redevelopment and growth of the study area. The Planned Action SEIS will identify potential public improvements and will include a Form-Based Code that may change the current zoning regulations. Adoption of the Station Area Plan by City Council (anticipated Spring 2021) will not require redevelopment, closure, or displacement of any existing residential or commercial properties. However, the permitted use or intensity of future development within the zoning of some properties may change from what it is today.

3. How will the Station Area Plan make this area of Kirkland better for pedestrians and cyclists?

We have already heard from many community members that want to prioritize non-motorized transportation modes, like walking and biking, in the Station Area Plan. One of the major components of the Station Area Plan is studying mobility and connectivity for all modes, with an emphasis on making the study area safer and more comfortable for pedestrians, cyclists, and people with limited mobility. Currently, a few areas of focus are: providing multimodal connections between the BRT Station and downtown; providing connections between the BRT Station to the Cross Kirkland Corridor (CKC) for cyclists and pedestrians; making it easier to travel to and through the interchange on NE 85th Street for all modes; and, exploring key areas for new connections with future development. The Station Area Plan will identify potential public improvements. Check out the initial concepts developed for Mobility/Transportation on our online [Story Map](#). You can contact the City's project manager, Allison Zike, with any questions or comments at azike@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3259.

4. Will the Station Area Plan include changes to existing zoning in the study area?

Another major component of the Station Area Plan is studying land use and development. There is at least one way in which we know that zoning will be changing, and that is in the *type* of zoning code that will be used within parts of the Station Area. The City received a grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce to develop Form-based Codes for portions of the study area. A form-based code is a land development regulation that uses physical form (rather than separation of uses, as in Kirkland’s current zoning code) as the organizing principle for the code. 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.

The team will also explore the possibility of other zoning changes, which will include studying different combinations of allowed uses and different levels of allowed development intensity, including height and building footprints. Three distinct alternatives for land use and development intensity will be studied with the SEIS, including a no-action alternative that will propose to maintain the existing land use and level of development intensity from the City’s currently adopted Comprehensive Plan in the study area. The three alternatives will ultimately be presented to City Council for them to consider community input and choose a preferred alternative for the final Station Area Plan. The preferred alternative may be a mix of these or may be one of the alternatives. Check out the initial concepts developed for Development on our online [Story Map](#) to learn more about preliminary ideas for land use and zoning.

5. Has the Station Area Plan project changed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and/or the Black Lives Matter movement?

Yes and no. One of the biggest ways in which the Station Area Plan has evolved due to the pandemic has been in how the project team is engaging with community members to gather input. Due to public health guidelines, the project team has identified virtual engagement methods to replace several planned in-person events, supplemented with other forms of engagement for those unable to participate virtually, in alignment with the goal of equity and inclusion in engagement. You can learn more by reading the project [Public Engagement Plan](#) and in the below FAQ section on Station Area Plan Process.

The vision and goals for the project already included examining how to improve community equity, health, and the resiliency of the Station Area community to events like a pandemic, as well as economic resiliency. The importance of including these components have been emphasized by community input and the rapidly evolving, worldwide response. The COVID-19 pandemic and related economic uncertainty has also exacerbated existing social injustices. The project [Opportunities and Analysis report](#) included some preliminary study of these issues in the Equity Impact Analysis, including identifying priority populations that may be more affected by the Station Area Plan or may be marginalized, as well as priority opportunities to support equity and resilience.

The Covid-19 pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement have not altered the project vision to “create a regional gateway district that supports transit, creates opportunity for all, and reflects Kirkland’s unique identity.” They have not changed the City or project commitment to an

equitable planning approach. The City funds authorized in the 2019-2020 City budget for the Station Area Plan and the Washington State Department of Commerce grant funding have not been adjusted at this time.

Parking in the Station Area

1. Is there parking planned for the new BRT station?

There is no park and ride facility, or public parking planned as a part of Sound Transit and WSDOT's interchange and BRT station project. We have already heard from many community members concerned that users of the BRT station may drive to the station and park their cars in nearby neighborhoods. Some people have also asked questions about parking requirements for future development as part of the Station Area Plan, especially if there are more homes and jobs than what currently exists within the Station Area.

2. How will the Station Area Plan address concerns that users of the BRT station will park their cars in the neighborhoods surrounding the station?

The project team is exploring options to address neighborhood concerns about parking. Check out the initial concepts developed for Mobility, including parking, on our online [Story Map](#). Several alternatives for managing parking will be analyzed as the alternatives are developed, and the project team will be discussing this topic with Planning Commission and City Council in coming months. Future public engagement phases outlined in the project [Public Engagement Plan](#) will give the community an opportunity to provide us with input on concepts to address parking concerns.

Station Area Plan Process

1. Who are the stakeholders in the Station Area Plan process?

In short, everyone that is interested in the Station Area Plan is an important stakeholder. Based on the project equity approach to planning and engagement, the project team has identified groups that are most affected by the Station Area Plan and those that may be marginalized. These include the following groups as stakeholders for direct outreach: Residents within the Station Area, seniors, renters, people with limited English proficiency, people of color, youth, low-income households, households with poor digital access, large property owners within the Station Area, businesses and large employers within the Station Area, transit riders, bicyclists, pedestrians, private sector employees, teachers and public employees, the development community associated with nearby properties, and other public agencies and tribes. You can view a detailed list of stakeholders within the [public participation plan](#). Please let us know if you have ideas about other stakeholders that we should involve by contacting the City's project manager, Allison Zike, at azike@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3259.

2. How can I get involved in the Station Area planning process?

The project team has worked to develop a robust [public participation plan](#), focusing on a project value of equity and a goal to create an inclusive district. Please review the linked plan to learn more about the schedule for the project- there are several identified points at which staff will be reaching out to the community for input. You can learn more about the project by visiting the webpage at www.kirklandwa.gov/stationareaplan, and the best way to keep up to date on upcoming events is to [sign up for the email update list](#). Project comments or questions can be

directed to the City’s project manager, Allison Zike, at azike@kirklandwa.gov or by calling (425) 587-3259.

3. How is the project team incorporating comments received from community members?

At each stage of the project, comments received will be summarized and made part of the public record for appointed and elected officials to consider as they provide direction for each phase of the Station Area planning process. Thus far, the project team has used what we’ve learned from the community to develop the initial concepts seen in the online [Story Map](#), as well as gauge the support or concern for individual concepts to guide decision-making. This input will be used to develop alternatives for technical analysis by the team of consultants involved in the Station Area planning process and community input on the alternatives will be considered by City Council when they choose a preferred alternative for the final Station Area Plan. The comments will be included in the Draft Supplementary Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) report that the team is preparing.