



Meeting Summary

Community Advisory Group: Downtown

Subject: Meeting #6 – Consolidating Feedback

Date, time: Thursday, May 5, 2022; 5pm to 7pm

Meeting Recording: <https://youtu.be/nKldcxWUngA>

Participants

CAG members: Elizabeth Archambault Matthew Curry Jacqueline Gruber Alex Hudson Steve Lewis Kylie Rolf Sascha Sorensen John Stilin Sabrina Villanueva Amy Worthington	Facilitator / presenters:	Ariel Davis, Facilitator Leda Chahim, Sound Transit Cathal Ridge, Executive Corridor Director, Sound Transit
	Agency Partners:	Colin Drake, City of Seattle
	Sound Transit / Consultant Team:	Sloan Dawson, Sound Transit Daniel Turner, Sound Transit David Shelton, Sound Transit Consultant

Meeting Summary

<p>Overview of Presentation Topics</p> <p>Cathal Ridge provided an update on community engagement and collaboration and next steps in the project process.</p>
<p>Consolidated Feedback from CAG Members</p> <p>The following abbreviations are used in this summary: Q: Question A: Answer C: Comment</p> <p><u>Draft EIS Alternative Feedback</u></p> <p>CAG members shared their feedback to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your thoughts on issues and tradeoffs between the alternatives? • What are your thoughts on confirming or modifying the preferred alternative? <p><u>Midtown and Westlake Stations</u></p> <p>C: (Elizabeth Archambault) I want to thank Leda, committee members and Sound Transit for allowing me to engage in this project. I gained a lot through this project; it's been a really good opportunity for me. It's the</p>



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first time I've been able to engage in something so transformative and important for our city. In terms of the question of alternatives, I am still strongly in favor of the pink line, the Preferred Alternative. I know it would slow down construction a bit, but I'd like the streetcar to be able to run on at least some sections of South Lake Union because I use that a lot and more people will use it as we get into the summer and as people come back to work. If there is a station on 7th & Republican, that would be terrific. In the Midtown and Westlake part of town, I prefer the alternative that would go up 5th Avenue. It's close to various things like the park.

C: (Matthew Curry) I continue to be supportive of the Preferred Alternative along 5th Avenue. There's a lot of excitement about the potential for the station that would be to the south of the library and also I think that the 5th Avenue connections at Westlake create a lot of more dynamic connections with alternative [transit] routes and with the existing Capitol Hill/Northgate light rail. Also, I feel that the 5th Avenue Preferred Alternative is more centrally located in the downtown core.

C: (Jacqueline Gruber) From a high level, it's a difficult question to answer. My role is to represent several different organizations participating in conversations that have happened with Downtown Seattle Association, as Vice Chair of SLU Community Council, as a member of the Mercer Stakeholders and also representing a property owner that has properties in multiple station locations, it's a big question. My biggest unknown is what Sound Transit has heard and is still beginning to digest – the comments you received on April 28th. None of these choices are easy and they all have tremendous tradeoffs and I think that while the Draft EIS is a very long document, I didn't make it through every single page. I did leave that process, after digesting thousands of pages, I still left with a lot of questions. That leaves me in a place of being curious about how the staff and the Board are thinking they may be able to digest these comments and turn around to a decision in July. It seems like from the groups I've participated in, there are a lot of questions about the tradeoffs of the permanent locations and how they would be designed to accommodate a good pedestrian and transit experience, but also a lot of questions about how the ten years leading up to it would unfold and even beyond, how the impacts would be mitigated. I didn't find a lot of information in the Draft EIS about why we're building things the way we're building them and if we've been able to examine different construction approaches to mitigate impacts at the surface level. Of all the groups I participate in, I've heard definite enthusiasm for the project and wanting to support Sound Transit in any way we can, so the final outcome is going to accommodate generations of folks. We call it the 100-year project, I hope it's more than that. We need to make decisions with a really long timeline in mind, but I've also seen where we've been short-sighted because we think that things are minor inconveniences, but they end up lingering for a long time because we didn't think about the long-term implications for communities, to neighborhoods, to residents, to businesses, particularly ground-floor businesses. I don't think we've started that conversation yet. In terms of the stations where I'm most engaged in conversations, I think there's a lot of support for the Harrison St [South Lake Union] station. There's not interest or need to be putting the line along Mercer where it's further removed from transit connections and the heart of the neighborhood; I'm hearing a lot of consensus there. It sounds like there's more work that needs to be done at Seattle Center to figure out what station location would truly be appropriate and serve the resident organizations. I don't know that one has been identified or one has been fully studied to understand how that would unfold. The Denny station needs a lot of work. I don't think it's possible to close Westlake for four years and be able to put that neighborhood back together afterwards. It would have implications on the businesses located there and future transit ridership. That's the last station I'll comment on because I don't have familiarity with the Midtown and Westlake stations.

C: (Alex Hudson) Similar to Jacqueline's perspective, I don't know that I feel prepared in this meeting to be making specific comments about the specific stations. Transportation Choices Coalition has approached this from a values-based perspective with the organizations that we're partnering with. The values that we're thinking about in making these tradeoffs is around long-term benefits for our region. You've heard me speak here about an understanding of how these stations can be used to maximize accessibility both now and long



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term, either through increasing the walkshed or thinking about the growth potential for equitable TOD and economic activity in the station areas, a desire to see stations that maximize the potential for transit accessibility, walkability, and especially connections in and to the stations themselves with our transit network at the surface as well as a concern for the real impacts that construction can have in this period especially around transit mobility and ADA accessibility in this city. And a desire to see that we are really intentional about how we put our city back together, so that as we repair and heal from the inevitable construction impacts, that we are intentional about what these stations are building for and toward. The letter that we sent in had some comments about places where there's more discussion and I would say there are tradeoffs in the Midtown segment relative to those values.

The tradeoff I think about the most as it relates to Midtown is the walkshed enabled by the station. I want to make sure we're thinking about destinations both immediate and destinations long-term and especially wanting to see a deep level of connection to the high employment district and important regional medical facilities in the First Hill neighborhood.

C: (Steve Lewis) In general, I prefer the Preferred Alternative and I'm especially concerned about the 6th Avenue station and the hill that separates 5th and 6th Avenue and accessibility. 5th Avenue is fairly accessible because there is a series of buildings, particularly the public library, that can get you up to 5th Avenue even though the hills are quite steep. There's no comparable route to 6th Avenue. Beyond that, I'm concerned about what you're going to shut down to build anything in Midtown because I really haven't heard a plan for where traffic on 4th, and to a lesser extent on 5th Avenue, would go during construction. I don't have a lot of comments on the 5th and 6th Avenue [Westlake] stations at Pine Street. They look fairly similar in terms of the issues I'm concerned about.

C: (Kylie Rolf) I will echo similar comments from Jacqueline, Alex, and others. I am primarily here with my day job hat on which is representing Downtown Seattle Association. We have a vested interest in the end product, but where we and our membership is at this time is more focusing on the lead-up to the construction period, the construction period, and the construction impacts in the Downtown core and South Lake Union. I have piecemeal input to give, which you will see in our comment letter that we submitted last week, but overall this has been a difficult exercise for me and for others. Because if you're coming at it from a lens of economic development impacts, impacts to Downtown residents, impacts to Downtown businesses, arts and cultural organizations, in order to formulate meaningful opinions and comments, it is really pretty impossible to do with the level of information contained in this Draft EIS. Things like construction timing and phasing throughout the segment, street closure phasing and durations, plans for pedestrian, traffic, and transit detours. It's a pretty difficult exercise to be able to formulate opinions. I'm hopeful that Sound Transit will look at station design a little differently than in other neighborhoods throughout the city. Downtown's built environment is dense and heavily utilized. I really hope that Sound Transit, when thinking about station design, employs good urban planning techniques and principles and uses this as an opportunity to not just "do no harm", but to look for opportunities to enhance the current built environment. The Westlake station as well... due to the unique situation in those surrounding blocks, when thinking about construction impacts and street closures, there's an eye towards thinking about the public safety impacts and vibrancy impacts of that area in particular. In a lot of the conversations I've had over the past couple months about this area in particular, and the new Downtown tunnel that will be built, I've heard a lot of folks harkening back to the building of the current 3rd Avenue transit tunnel and just really hoping that Sound Transit looks at lessons learned there; there's the perspective of some that in many ways Downtown has never recovered from that project. I'd urge us to be thoughtful and again wanted to reiterate that it's pretty difficult to form opinions and thoughts with the level of information that is contained in the EIS particularly with an eye toward neighborhood and area impacts.

C: (John Stilin) When I look at the station refinement for Midtown, I see it's saving \$20M by digging out into the street, I wonder if that really saves anything. It's probably heresy to say \$20M is a drop in the bucket. The



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impact of making that refinement, are we going to pay for that some other way in 4th Avenue? The alignment on 5th makes sense; 6th looks odd to me since it's bumped up right against the freeway, that didn't seem to be a great place to have a station where you come out and one side is urban, one side is a freeway. I realize some will come down the hill from there, but I think the Preferred alignment there is fine. At Westlake station, and the refinement to save \$190M savings by eliminating an entrance that looked like it was going to be in Westlake Park – that seemed like a fairly good thing to do because it doesn't look like we have a huge impact on people walking from one side of the street to the other. The entrance design will do a lot to get people from both directions; it's on a corner so it should get a crossflow of pedestrians from multiple areas. So in that section, Preferred looks like the best choice. I'm not a Downtowner, I haven't focused on that so I don't want to be telling anybody in downtown how they should be doing their alignment. From what data is presented here to act on, that seems to be the right choice.

C: (Sabrina Villanueva) I don't have much to say on the Midtown station and for the Westlake station, my main concern is closing 4th Avenue permanently for 2 years. Echoing other comments, I think that the 5th Avenue alignment looks good, but when you dig down into the details on construction impacts, that's what I'm most interested in. Being able to understand alternate construction methods that could avoid long-term road closures that would have short-term and long-term negative impacts on the economic vibrancy of those streets and areas. With 3rd Avenue being transit only, 4th Avenue does a heavy lift going north and 2nd Avenue going south. That section on Pine Street is less concerning because it's already more of a walking street. If there's an alternative to closing 4th Avenue for two years, that would be great.

C: (Amy Worthington) With regard to Downtown and Westlake, I did not spend as much time focusing on that area either; most of my focus was on Seattle Center and the groups that were evaluating the South Lake Union and Seattle Center stations. Being a person who has worked in Downtown for over two decades and knows the downtown grid, I will echo the comments of Kylie and Jacqueline and others with regard to not having enough information to understand how this is going to be carried out to feel like I can [comment]... Intuitively, 5th Avenue, the Preferred Alternative, seems like the better route, but without the details and knowing how the construction's going to happen and how all of this will come together, it's hard to say. I will echo what Kylie was saying with regard to 3rd Avenue and when they ripped up the tunnel there. You can tell 3rd Avenue still has a different feel in downtown than the other streets and I don't think it was very well executed from an urban design, urban planning standpoint. That is where my greatest concern is with regard to this whole project – what it's going to be like to carry out the construction and design and the integration of a mature urban area that's dense and has a compromised urban street grid. Closing down 4th Avenue; I don't even know how you do that. I don't know if you've ever been downtown when something shuts down. The whole area gets gridlocked and pushes everything into the neighborhoods; it's just a mess. So, to have something that lasts more than 2 or 3 hours on the downtown streets, I don't know how it works. I have a lot more questions than answers with regards to those two stations.

Denny and South Lake Union Stations

C: (Elizabeth Archambault) I would like it not to be on Mercer. There's already so much traffic and transportation and shops that I normally shop in and go to on Mercer Street that I think that closing it down for a significant amount of time would have an impact on moving around what I like to think of as Downtown/South Lake Union, which is Mercer St/Westlake Avenue North. My preference would be not to have Mercer Street shut down, so my preference is to route it away from Mercer. I know it might be possible to reconfigure the streetcar in some manner so that it does run, but I know the tradeoff for that may be extra construction time. But, if there's any way we could have the streetcar running, that would be my preference because I do use the streetcar a lot coming from Fred Hutchinson all the way to Mercer which would be beneficial to me. That would be my thoughts: avoid Mercer and reconfigure to keep some portion of the streetcar.



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C: (Matthew Curry) For the two stops in Denny Triangle/South Lake Union, if we could snap our fingers and have these stations in place, I think everyone would agree that the Denny Station at Westlake [Avenue] with its southern entrances at 8th or Blanchard area, that just creates all kinds of walkshed opportunity that is really worthwhile. Unfortunately, we can't just snap our fingers and have it be there, so I tread carefully because I know we have a lot of stakeholders who are significantly concerned about the duration of construction activity to place a station within the Westlake corridor. So, although I do support the Preferred Alternative here, just acknowledging any further study or efforts that can be made to mitigate the construction impacts. My only other point of reference that I think is somewhat closely related, is to look at the U District Station construction that occurred recently. That project closed a number of streets in the heart of the U District for 3.5 years and things are recovering wonderfully. I think we are all adaptable and we can make things happen and the Westlake location long-term is just a terrific siting spot for a station. You know our views on Harrison & 7th street [South Lake Union] station also in the Preferred Alternative, continues to be preferred. I've enumerated previously the various reasons that we support that location to serve the Uptown triangle as well as the western part of South Lake Union.

C: (Jacqueline Gruber) Nothing to add.

C: (Alex Hudson) Most important for this [Westlake] station is the connection within the station and to the street, this will ultimately be the largest, the highest ridership of any station in the entire system. Ensuring that however it ends up being built that people are able to experience transfers within the tunnels as seamlessly and as efficiently as possible. And that as people are exiting the station, that they are seamlessly integrated into a very rich network of transit accessibility and safe walking/biking paths. PSRC research shows that investments in accessibility are the single greatest input we can make into making these stations be useful for the greatest number of people. So, this station, similar to others but with a really particularly keen focus here, needs to embody the absolute best of the best in terms of vertical and horizontal conveyance, transfer and wayfinding and integration into the larger surface network.

C: (Steve Lewis) The [Denny Station] alternative at Terry is up a very significant hill and [Denny Station at] Westlake is well and away the more accessible place and path from downtown. In terms of accessibility for people with mobility limitations, the Westlake station [location] is significantly greater than the Terry alternative. I remember how bad Mercer was before it got fixed and it still isn't great but closing half of it for 3 years would be a complete and utter disaster. There's too much traffic on Mercer.

C: (Kylie Rolf) Not much more to add. I have very serious concerns about a 4 year closure of Westlake Avenue. Short of having a more thorough view of mitigation plans and reroutes, I can't really expand on that any further other than to say it seems like it would be unmitigable. I would like to see Sound Transit take a look at some mix and match options for the Denny Station, potentially keeping the 5th Ave spine intact, but what does it look like to place the Denny Station at Terry and how would that work in terms of linking that station location up again to the South Lake Union Preferred at Harrison.

C: (John Stilin) I think there was a proposal to combine the two stations as a refinement to save a half billion dollars. That's a great financial idea, but you're looking at changing ridership by 10,000 a day over a period of time. I'm not sure how this works into the walkshed in that area and how it furthers dense development in the area by eliminating one of the stations. When you take the alternative route, you're just pushing into an area of Mercer Street that is going to wreak havoc on the city. I'm not convinced there's as much, from my knowledge of driving through those areas, as much potential as the Preferred Alternative. I'm not sure cutting a station out to save a half billion is the right choice this early on. Ten years out, it could be real folly even though it's that large amount of money. That's where real estate people understand the value of the property



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and the development, they can tell you if it's a wise tradeoff. It saves money, but at the cost of what? I think with these two stations, leave them there and the Preferred Alternative seems like the right route.

C: (Sabrina Villanueva) From a location perspective, I like where the station would end up better on the Preferred route; it captures the most amount of residents, of employees, of folks that would utilize that coming in and out of town or even going to different ends of the city. I think when you go across Denny, there's sort of this mental barrier. We lose a lot of pedestrians and folks if you go to the other side of Denny. That being said, the impact to the area--it is a dense built environment and this would be very disruptive. The partial closures on Blanchard and 8th and 7th are fine. My assumption is that's only a partial closure on Blanchard because that's a highly utilized Metro route. I'm hoping there's a way to do partial closures on Westlake to continue having the streetcar open. I know construction teams can get pretty creative with methods. If there was some way to develop and construct it where we have partial closures but maintain streetcar access, I think we would get a win-win.

C: (Amy Worthington) I wanted to echo what John was saying about the consolidation idea. I am opposed to that idea. I know it is a lot of money, but this is such a densely populated area. I think it would be short-sighted to eliminate a station in this area for cost savings given how dense it is now and will become over time. It's not the area to be looking at less stations so I'm opposed to that cost savings measure. I would agree that the Preferred route for that Denny station and South Lake Union station on Harrison feel like the right places to land a station with the huge caveat again of not understanding how you're going to execute on that from a construction standpoint. The specifics around that are very vague still but generally speaking, geographically, the Preferred line seems like the right place for the Denny & South Lake Union stations.

Seattle Center

C: (Elizabeth Archambault) The Preferred plan is where I have real concerns. Though I really want the line to go through Denny and avoid Mercer and also go on 7th & [Harrison] because I agree that would be more beneficial for use, I'm really unhappy with the thought that it would go through the Seattle Center campus itself. We have such unique land and park at Seattle Center that I just don't want it to go through the Seattle Center. A lot of other people have been able to more eloquently explain why, but as a lifelong consumer of transportation in Seattle and as a person who went to the World's Fair as a kid with my family and heavily use it during the summer and autumn, I just don't want it to run through Seattle Center. I don't know how that would work given that that is the Preferred line and I have been supportive of the Preferred line, but I don't want it to take away any space from the fountain or cut down any trees. We need more open space and more trees. That is my general impression of the preferred line running close to the Climate Pledge Arena.

C: (Matthew Curry) This station location is the one area where I'm hearing lots of interest from people about adopting a mix and match approach where if we could go with a station either in the alternative alignment or further to the west of Climate Pledge Arena more in the heart of Uptown. To locate a station away from the grounds of the center would actually be preferable. I know there's a lot of folks here who have Seattle Center interest, so I'll give my time to them to describe their preferences.

C: (Jacqueline Gruber) There's pretty broad acknowledgement or a lot of voices that are asking for more options or more analysis here. I agree we're looking for putting transit in public spaces and downtown already has so few public spaces and such little open space compared to other neighborhoods around the city. We're robbing Peter to pay Paul, it would be great to keep and preserve what we have and add to it by putting stations somewhere else. I don't know if we've exhausted those possibilities, but would support an additional look at that.



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C: (Alex Hudson) This is a station area that definitely needs more conversation to make sure that we can balance some complicated interests here. Ultimately, this is just one of the most important, vibrant, year-long, cultural, and civic assets that we have in the City of Seattle, so balancing the ability for folks to access and enjoy that while staying core to its essence is going to be a difficult challenge here. It's really critical during time of construction that we're really keyed into transportation impacts knowing that throughout the construction period there will continue to be very large-scale events on a regular basis. So, wanting to be as tightly coordinated with a variety of stakeholders to ensure that people are able... Big crush load events happen all the time, so want to make sure we're providing accessible transit and multimodal opportunities for people to get to those destinations.

C: (Steve Lewis) I'm still going to express my concern about construction on Mercer. I'm concerned about Seattle Center as well both in terms of what it looks like during construction and how much impact the station has on the center when it gets done. If there were no impact, closer to the Climate Pledge Arena is probably the better site, but if it were to seriously impact either the Arena or the Seattle Rep and Cornish, I might tend to incline toward Mercer.

C: (Kylie Rolf) I don't have anything additional to add other than I support the calls for more study from other stakeholders.

C: (John Stilin) This is one that I know more about than other places because I've been actively involved with the Seattle Center group and on the Board of Trustees at the Seattle Rep in full disclosure. The alternative alignment on Mercer scares a lot of people around Seattle Center. I came out of the theater a couple weeks ago when the Dua Lipa concert let out and there were a number of events going on and Mercer was all red lights. I cannot imagine Mercer being shut down when some of these events come out. Seattle Center looks at that as the main artery for people to get there who have to drive, who can't use transit and that doesn't look good to them. The alternative that was put out about moving the station further to the west into the Uptown neighborhood is the one that a lot of people at Seattle Center like because it still brings us something that we really want and that is transit access to Seattle Center because it makes us truly a regional destination by rail. The City of Seattle presented some interesting ideas of how they could integrate that station into Seattle Center by turning Republican into a pedestrian corridor with some improvements. I think there's a way to bring a station close to Seattle Center and provide all the benefits of transit by moving it to the west. That's going to spare a lot of non-profit organizations; it's going to spare a public resource a lot of potential damage. I think about the temporary things that lead to permanent damage so I'd like to see it move west. It also provides opportunities for the Uptown community to be a lot better integrated into a station and bring development to that area. If you move it, then Sound Transit can provide TOD resources to do transit-oriented development on the land they acquire. That could have some very good long-term benefits for the neighborhood in addition to Seattle Center. I would encourage the Preferred alignment with the station moved to the west and I think that will pay off richly for that area.

C: (Sabrina Villanueva) I do not have anything to add for this location.

C: (Amy Worthington) Similar to John, I probably have spent the most time considering the options and the tradeoffs for the Seattle Center station. As a number of us went through the Draft EIS and we've talked to Sound Transit a bunch about, one thing that was not examined and why this station more than others needs a whole level of study beyond traffic is the surge issues with the events happening and how you design a station to handle that well, so it doesn't end up into a spillover situation onto other areas in the neighborhoods, so you can handle surge with station design. Even before that, the degree of sensitive receivers, the number of sensitive receivers on this campus, the Draft EIS didn't really appreciate and understand how many exist on the campus and what a construction period of 5-7 years, many of these



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organizations... KEXP is a 24-7 operation, opera, SIFF, Vera, they all have equipment and things that are critical to their operations that would be disrupted by construction and also by the station [after construction], [though] less so [than construction]. So, to have a station right there you do wonder whether they could survive beyond the construction period to be there when the station opened. Republican where the station is being proposed is a critical area for load and unload and maintenance access to the station that I don't think was really well considered when proposing this as a preferred station. Echoing what everyone else said, Seattle Center is such an amazing cultural arts and open space amenity to the city that doesn't really have a lot of that kind of amenity, that to put a station where it's being proposed seems like it will disrupt the contemplative and open space components that so many people enjoy of the center. So, I really think this area needs considerable further study because certainly the idea of moving to Mercer has a lot of traffic implications to it.

Cost Savings and Refinement Concepts Feedback

CAG members shared their feedback to the following question:

- What are your thoughts on the cost saving and refinement ideas?

Q: (Elizabeth Archambault) I'm wondering what would a station on the sidewalk look like? I think that needs to be explained. I'm just trying to understand what that would look like.

A: (Sloan Dawson) If you look at legacy transit systems, entrances in the right-of-way is pretty typical. Generally, you see a fairly narrow entrance with stair or elevator combination that's in the streetscape which is roughly the width of a typical travel lane. You may shrink the size of the street cross-section, essentially pushing out the curb, but there are plenty of examples throughout the world including NYC and DC Metro.

C: (Elizabeth Archambault) I would use something on the sidewalk as long as there was a sidewalk. There used to be an elevator across the street from the Monorail entrance. Across that street, there's a recessed elevator you could use to get down to transit center. I'm wondering if that would be what you're thinking of, still the sidewalk but a recessed area for a stairwell and elevator?

A: (Sloan Dawson) That's one strategy; that's more integrated into adjacent development. Another strategy could be positioning it away from the building within the right-of-way and having it be a standalone structure with a canopy over it. DC Metro has good examples of having an architectural presence.

C: (Elizabeth Archambault) As a consumer of transit, I would definitely use that. That would be worth studying. It would be an interesting element, particularly if we could get trees. This kind of option would be worth studying for the Midtown sections and perhaps other sections as well. I also agree with other members of the committee that we have all the stops that we need now. This is our opportunity to have input and to build stations that people can use. I'm hoping that there are some other cost savings or other way to help the budget without having Denny and South Lake Union merge. I'd like two stations opening there, would be beneficial for a lot of people to have two stations rather than one.

C: (Matthew Curry) On the Midtown station, a hometown example that I was trying to wrap my head around in terms of footprint is the downtown tunnel entrance on 3rd at Cherry & James Street. When I see the kind of image that was presented, I'm excited because there's an opportunity to do something modern and fun that would be attractive. I don't see those types of entrances as being a detriment in any way. Obviously there needs to be elevator core accommodation, but I don't have any issue with those kinds of stairway entrances. That said, one thing that is a concern, that we'd want to study and avoid, is at the 3rd Avenue entrance at Cherry and James, it is right up against the curb so it does constrict the sidewalk. So, there was mention of bumping out the sidewalk--the issue I'd want to highlight there is on 4th Ave northbound in the right lane during morning rush hour, it is a transit lane, so take that into consideration. In terms of could the footprint be provided and sidewalk expanded in a way that would still allow buses on 4th Avenue to be able to continue their routing? Going to the Westlake Station, I don't know that this was indicated in the study, so I'm putting



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this out there and hopefully someone can address it—I don't know to what extent the Westlake station interacting with the existing downtown bus tunnel and all of its several entrances has walking volumes identified. It seems like someone who wanted to use that station might enter through the existing Westlake bus tunnel station and then transition into the new station. With that in mind, I'm not against eliminating or consolidating this one entrance, it's a great opportunity that deserves further study and in that study there should be an additional look at existing station entrances that are not specifically part of ST3 that could support that. In the SLU neighborhood, we have advocated for very long to have two stations in that area. I really cannot support consolidating into a single station.

C: (Jacqueline Gruber) If any of these ideas are to be discussed, it feels very premature. Any of these would warrant a lot more detail and information before I would feel prepared to even begin to weigh in. I recognize Sound Transit released its annual program review recently and it shows that costs continue to deviate from the initial budget estimate and so we have an increasing gap that needs to be addressed and nobody wants delay, which is one of the ways that you can make up that cost gap. The burden of proof, for lack of a better term, is really high if we're going to reverse course on what voters were promised, what they voted for, what they're paying for, before we start haphazardly cutting things here or there. So far we haven't seen information on these ideas on the true impact to ridership. I don't know if we're comparing apples to apples when we talk about cutting a station—is that 50% capacity or are we talking about one bigger station? I think we need to know more about the urban design implications and access to these stations and the size of the station and how people would get in and out, stairs, escalators, elevator, all the different ingress/egress methods. Without understanding the negative impacts of what we're causing for the money that we're saving, and again being a multigenerational project and hundreds of years of use hopefully, to what end are we trying to save \$100M here or there? I don't mean to be flippant, it's taxpayer money that's precious and needs to be treated with a lot of deliberation, but I don't think we have any information to weigh the value of that money or the value of that savings.

C: (Alex Hudson) I'll keep my thoughts as high level as the information that we have. Station access and station integration into the urban form of what is and likely always will be the densest residential and economic hubs in our state, and the five or six state region, is vitally important to make sure that we're maximizing the usability of these critical investments over time. There's a true balance that needs to happen and budgets are real documents and taxpayer dollars are, as Jacqueline said, precious. However, getting it right is the single most important thing we need to do for the generations of people who are coming behind us and counting on these stations to deliver for them. Our value is around making sure that station access and urban form integration is done to the platinum standard. Our comments at TCC have been around maximizing potential for equitable TOD which has an overlap with values like minimizing real estate costs. The concept of combining stations is a pretty tough pill to swallow. I, of course, am a First Hill resident and have direct experience with the everyday reality of living in a community that should have had a station and didn't. It should be the absolute highest burden of proof necessary before the public, the taxpayers, the voters should be asked to consider such an option, [it] should really be our option of last resort.

C: (Steve Lewis) Westlake is really where we want to have the station. There's significantly less activity on Dexter, it's up a hill which makes it less accessible, and there's a significant distance from the Westlake corridor which is really where you'd like to end up. I'm still concerned about the slope on the sidewalk at Columbia. I think that it's possible to build a sidewalk entrance without forcing people, particularly with mobility difficulties, to go up the slope on Columbia but it's not easy. Columbia is one of the steepest streets we have in Downtown. In the past few weeks, when I attempted to use the Westlake station, there were four elevators from Westlake to the street and three of them were not working. So, as long as the two Westlake stations connect, so that you are in fact adding 6, 7, 8 elevators, from what is effectively a single station, I'm ok with the consolidation. But if the consolidation ends up giving you relatively few elevators coming out of the very important station, that could make the station effectively inaccessible. So, that's my concern about



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the Westlake refinement. If there are alternative routes, like connections between stations, that concern might go away because there are already four elevators coming out of Westlake even if sometimes many of them don't work. Those are my primary concerns.

C: (Kylie Rolf) I'll echo a lot of Jacqueline's comments. I just don't think that at this point I have enough information on any of these alternatives that are proposed to just responsibly posit any opinions or thoughts on what should or should not be further explored. But, I can just add my voice to what other folks have said that I do believe strongly that the project should be delivered as the voters approved it, so I just can't support elimination of any of the stations.

C: (John Stilin) Where you showed connecting the Preferred Alternative (pink) to the blue alternative where you're tunneling under the opera house. All I can say is from friends of mine at Seattle Center, that was a way to take two bad things and make them even worse because you still have the problem of going into Mercer and now you're running a train under, as someone said, very sensitive receivers. The theater isn't only at night, the opera isn't only at night, there are rehearsals, there are things that take place all day at these places. I know some people just lost it when they saw that line going under the building. Going back to the cost savings, I understand we're talking big money here. But we have to think timeframe when we do these cost savings. I don't know if someone's thinking in tomorrow's dollars or today's dollars. We're looking at a system that we're going to be building out for the next ten years. We've got add-ons to that for 10, 30, 40 years after that. We're really trying to take our region into being a world-class city and that costs money. I think trying to cut things out of the system for a savings today that would hurt us in the future is just really tough when I look at how real estate values are increasing here and how this area has changed in the last 30 years that I've been here. I really have concerns about deleting stations in areas where they could bring vibrancy to the community, some economic development. I would encourage you to look other places to find money or even think of innovative ideas. I know I mentioned air rights over stations to recover the cost. For some reason WSDOT is loath to put things over their freeways and roads and it seems there could be opportunities to recover money by allowing developers to go over top of stations. I think there are other ways to get creative with this and make this pencil out as opposed to deleting stations. If I was in South Lake Union and someone said we're taking your station away, I think I'd be livid.

C: (Sabrina Villanueva) I agree with not combining the stations for all the reasons stated. But I am interested in some of the refinements. I actually kind of like the idea of accessing in the sidewalk. It reminds me of New York and some other major cities where to me it felt more accessible, it was right there and you could just pop in to a station. On Lenora, I was trying to picture where that is. (*David clarifies location adjacent to Urban Triangle Park*) This seems very interesting to me. I think that would be worth exploring.

C: (Amy Worthington) I don't feel like I have anything more to add.

Materials shared:

- Presentation https://oohwsblink.blob.core.windows.net/media/Default/images/AE%200036-17_DT_Community_Advisory_Group_Meeting_20220505.pdf

Action items/next steps:

- Sound Transit to consolidate CAG member feedback to share with the Sound Transit Board.