



LIGHT RAIL PERMITTING CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ADVISORY DOCUMENT – RECOMMENDATION TO DIRECTOR BEL RED SEGMENT DESIGN AND MITIGATION PERMIT OCTOBER 5, 2014

Introduction

The Light Rail Permitting Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) was appointed by the Bellevue City Council consistent with the terms of the Light Rail Overlay regulations contained in the city's Land Use Code (LUC). Land Use Code section 20.25M.035.A describes the CAC purpose to:

1. **Dedicate the time necessary to represent community, neighborhood and citywide interests in the permit review process;** and
2. Ensure that issues of importance are surfaced early in the permit review process while there is still time to address design issues while minimizing cost implications*; and
3. **Consider the communities and land uses through which the RLRT System or Facility passes, and set “the context” for the regional transit authority to respond to as facility design progresses;** and
4. **Help guide RLRT System and Facility design to ensure that neighborhood objectives are considered and design is context sensitive by engaging in on-going dialogue with the regional transit authority and the City, and by monitoring follow-through*;** and
5. Provide a venue for receipt of public comment on the proposed RLRT Facilities and their consistency with the policy and regulatory guidance of paragraph 20.25M.035.E below and Sections 20.25M.040 and 20.25M.050 of this Part; and
6. **Build the public's sense of ownership in the project*;** and
7. **Ensure CAC participation is streamlined and effectively integrated into the permit review process to avoid delays in project delivery.**

* Identifies the focus of this Advisory Document

Design and Mitigation Permit Review

This phase of review is intended to provide feedback regarding effectiveness of design and landscape development in incorporating prior guidance at context and schematic design stages. This phase is intended to provide further input and guidance, based on the input and guidance provided in the context setting phase, on compliance (or lack of compliance) with the policy and regulatory guidance of LUC 20.25M and LUC 20.25M.040 and 20.25M.050, and whether

information is sufficient to evaluate such compliance. The CAC is charged with providing the Director of the Development Services Department with a final advisory document.

CAC Work Product

The work of the CAC at each review stage will culminate in a CAC advisory document that describes the phase of review and CAC feedback. The work product required following the Pre-Development Phase of CAC review is intended to provide Sound Transit with early guidance and advice that is integrated into future Design and Mitigation Permit submittals. This final Design and Mitigation Permit advisory document is intended to provide the Director of the Development Services Department with a recommendation to demonstrate Sound Transit compliance with Design and Mitigation Permit Decision Criteria pursuant to LUC 20.25M.030.C.3.

On April 8, 2014, Sound Transit was provided with the Bel Red Segment Pre-Development Advisory Document. That document outlined Sound Transit compliance with context setting characteristics and early Design and Mitigation Permit requirements. The pre-development advisory document also included several recommendations on additional items to be addressed during formal permit review.

The following represents the CAC advisory recommendation to the Development Services Department Director regarding compliance related to LUC 20.25M.030.C.3, LUC 20.25M.040, and 20.25M.050.

20.25M.030.C.3 Design and Mitigation Permit Decision Criteria

A proposal for a RLRT system or facility may be approved or approved with conditions; provided, that such proposal satisfies the following criteria:

- a. The applicant has demonstrated compliance with the CAC Review requirements of LUC 20.25M.035; and
 - Sound Transit has demonstrated compliance with CAC review requirements by attending and presenting materials regarding the East Link Light Rail System and Facilities at CAC meetings held the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month. In addition to the regularly scheduled meetings Sound Transit and City staff provided tours of the existing Central Link Light Rail System and Facilities and proposed East Link route in the City of Bellevue including the Bel Red Segment.
- b. The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan including without limitation the Light Rail Best Practices referenced in Comprehensive Plan Policy TR-75.2 and the policies set forth in LUC 20.25M.010.B.7; and
 - The East Link Project has demonstrated consistency with the numerous Comprehensive Plan Policies that are applicable to light rail (LU-9, LU-22, LU-24, ED-3, TR-75.1, TR-75.2,

TR-75.5, TR-75.7, TR-75.8, TR-75.9, TR-75.12, TR-75.15, TR-75.17, TR-75.18, TR-75.20, TR-75.22, TR-75.23, TR-75.27, TR-75.28, TR-75.32, TR-75.33, TR-75.34, TR-75.35, TR-118 and UT-39). This proposal is also consistent with the Light Rail Best Practices which focus on community and neighborhoods, community involvement, connecting people to light rail, land use, street design and operations, system elements (elevated, at-grade, and tunnel), property values, station security, and construction impacts and mitigation. A detailed description of project compliance will be included in the issued Design and Mitigation Permit.

c. The proposal complies with the applicable requirements of this Light Rail Overlay District; and

- Compliance with all elements of the Light Rail Overlay District will be demonstrated in the issued Design and Mitigation Permit.

d. The proposal addresses all applicable design guidelines and development standards of this Light Rail Overlay District in a manner which fulfills their purpose and intent; and

- As discussed below, the proposal addresses all applicable elements of 20.25M.040 and 20.25M.050.

e. The proposal is compatible with and responds to the existing or intended character, appearance, quality of development and physical characteristics of the subject property and immediate vicinity; and

- The Bel Red Segment of East Link must comply with all applicable Bel Red District requirements pursuant to LUC 20.25D. Bel Red zoning and development standards were created in anticipation of future light rail extension and future development potential. Additional analysis of future land use around the proposed 130th Station will happen with the City of Bellevue's Station Area Planning process.

f. The proposal will be served by adequate public facilities including streets, fire protection, and utilities; and

- A majority of existing public facilities are available to serve East Link in Bel Red, however, the city has initiated numerous capital facilities projects to serve light rail and future additional residential and commercial density in the corridor. These improvements include, but are not limited to 120th Ave NE, 124th Avenue NE, and the future Spring Boulevard which will serve the 130th Station.

g. The proposal complies with the applicable requirements of the Bellevue City Code, including without limitation those referenced in LUC 20.25M.010.B.8; and

- Development, construction and operation of the RLRT system and facilities will comply with applicable Bellevue City Codes, including the noise control code and environmental

procedures code. Technical analysis of Sound Transit submitted Noise Studies will be completed prior to issuance of the Design and Mitigation Permit.

h. The proposal is consistent with any development agreement or Conditional Use Permit approved pursuant to subsection B of this section; and

- The proposal is consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the City of Bellevue and the Sound Transit Board.

i. The proposal provides mitigation sufficient to eliminate or minimize long-term impacts to properties located near the RLRT facility or system, and sufficient to comply with all mitigation requirements of the Bellevue City Code and other applicable state or federal laws.

- Sound Transit will be required to avoid, minimize, and mitigate anticipated long-term impacts to properties located near the light rail system and facilities.

j. When the proposed RLRT facility will be located, in whole or in part, in a critical area regulated by Part 20.25H LUC, a separate Critical Areas Land Use Permit shall not be required, but such facility shall satisfy the following additional criteria:

i. The proposal utilizes to the maximum extent possible the best available construction, design and development techniques which result in the least impact on the critical area and critical area buffer; and

ii. The proposal incorporates the performance standards of Part 20.25H LUC to the maximum extent applicable; and

iii. The proposal includes a mitigation or restoration plan consistent with the requirements of LUC 20.25H.210; except that a proposal to modify or remove vegetation pursuant to an approved Vegetation Management Plan under LUC 20.25H.055.C.3.i shall not require a mitigation or restoration plan.

- Mitigation and restoration requirements per LUC 20.25H due to impacts to critical areas and their buffers will be incorporated into the Design and Mitigation Permit approval. Impacts to critical areas are limited in the Bel Red Segment, however, the Bel Red Segment will include a mitigation site that is intended to mitigate for impacts to wetlands and streams along the entire East Link alignment.

CAC Recommendation to the Director of Development Services

At the request of the CAC, CAC Pre-Development Phase advice that has been addressed in the Design and Mitigation Permit submittal and revision is included for the Director's reference.

20.25M.040 RLRT system and facilities development standards

1. Landscape Development

- The CAC recommends more native vegetation incorporated in the overall landscape plans. This should particularly include more evergreen trees.
- The CAC recommends more mature landscaping with the initial planting.
- The CAC recommends that all reasonable efforts should be made to ensure that in the interim condition prior to the completion of the future Spring Boulevard, the area around the 130th Station should not look unfinished or incomplete. Maximizing planting in available areas around the entry structures is one way to achieve this goal.
- The CAC recommends that a featured or signature tree(s) be included in the final landscape design for the Bel Red Segment. The future plaza in the vicinity of the Pacific Northwest Ballet at 136th Place NE is a suggested location.

2. Light and Glare

- The CAC recommends that measures should be taken to ensure that no lighting is directed skyward and any accent lighting results in a reflective glow. **(No lighting that is directed skyward is included in the Design and Mitigation Permit submittal. Sound Transit has included penetrations in the station entry concrete panels that will provide accent back lighting).**

20.25M.050 Design guidelines

1. Context and Design Considerations - The CAC was tasked with evaluating the existing context setting characteristics included in the Land Use Code in order to verify that the design of the station and alignment is consistent with the vision for Bel Red. The following characteristics are intended to implement the vision for Bel Red:
 - A thriving economy anchored by major employers, businesses unique to the subarea, and services important to the local community;
 - Vibrant, diverse, and walkable neighborhoods that support housing, population, and income diversity;
 - A comprehensive and connected parks and open space system;
 - Environmental improvements resulting from redevelopment;
 - A multimodal transportation system;
 - An unique cultural environment;

- Scale of development that does not compete with Downtown, and provides a graceful transition to residential areas farther to the east; and
- Sustainable development using state of the art techniques to enhance the natural and built environment and create a livable community.

2. Additional General Design Guidelines

- The CAC recommends sculptured precast concrete panels for the proposed 130th Station instead of the original Cor-ten design. **(The Design and Mitigation Permit plans include sculptured precast concrete panels instead of the Cor-ten steel at the entries).**
- The CAC recommends that organic shapes be incorporated into concrete panel design. **(The Design and Mitigation Permit submittal indicates the sculptured precast concrete panels at the entries include organic shapes).**
- The CAC recommends more color options for the 130th Station than the standard Sound Transit colors that were presented in the renderings and at the CAC meetings.
- The CAC recommends backlighting of the translucent panels and or the uses of colored lights on the exterior wall to create interesting shadows and forms. **(The Design and Mitigation Permit submittal indicates backlighting of the translucent glass at the entry areas as well as new accent lighting).**
- The CAC recommends that the base of the south face of the 130th Station retaining wall be simple and include architectural patterns above.
- The CAC recommends that the alignment and station design reflect the concept of an arts district as expressed in the Bel Red Subarea in Policy S-BR-45. **(The Sound Transit design team and selected artist have collaborated on the platform railings and the custom precast entry panels to reflect the concept of an active arts district. Although staff has seen the proposed platform railing concept, final design has not been submitted for City review as part of the Design and Mitigation Permit).**

Design and Mitigation Permit Approval

The recommendations contained in this Advisory Document represent the conclusion of the CAC review of the Bel Red Segment Design and Mitigation Permit. The recommendations included in this document shall be incorporated into the Director's administrative decision. Departures by the Director from specific recommendations included within the CAC's Design and Mitigation

Permit Advisory Document shall be limited to those instances where the Director determines that the departure is necessary to ensure that the RLRT facility or system is consistent with: (i) applicable policy and regulatory guidance contained in the Light Rail Overlay; (ii) authority granted to the CAC pursuant to this section; (iii) SEPA conditions or other regulatory requirements applicable to the RLRT system or facility; or (iv) state or federal law. Departures from the CAC Design and Mitigation Permit Advisory Document shall be addressed in the decision by the Director, and rationale for the departures shall be provided.