



LIGHT RAIL PERMITTING CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ADVISORY DOCUMENT SOUTH BELLEVUE SEGMENT PRE-DEVELOPMENT REVIEW MAY 13, 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

Pre-Development Review

This phase of review is intended to provide feedback regarding effectiveness at incorporating contextual direction into the early phases of design. The CAC is expected to provide advice regarding complementary building materials, integration of public art, preferred station furnishings from available options, universal design measures to enhance usability by all people, quality design, materials, landscape development, and tree retention. The CAC is 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 regulations and whether information is sufficient to evaluate such compliance.

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.

At the February 5th, 2014 CAC meeting Sound Transit presented its pre-development review stage package for the South Bellevue Segment. The CAC continued to discuss the South Bellevue Segment at the February 19th, 2014 and March 5th, 2014 meetings.

The following represents the CAC advisory comments regarding LUC 20.25M.040, 20.25M.050, and context setting sensitivity.

20.25M.040 RLRT system and facilities development standards

1. Building Height – No concerns expressed by the CAC. More project specific information will be included during the Design and Mitigation Permit review stage.
2. Setbacks – No concerns expressed by the CAC. More project specific information will be included during the Design and Mitigation Permit review stage.
3. Landscape Development
 - The CAC has a strong desire to see the use of a living wall designed into the South Bellevue Station Garage. This may be accomplished by using mesh screens or columns to support living screening.
 - The CAC would like Sound Transit to evaluate a living roof or roof deck planters as an additional way to relate the parking garage to the natural environment of Mercer Slough Nature Park.
 - The CAC would like to see green wall screening as an approach to soften some of the hard edges of the South Bellevue Station Garage. This would not necessary be a living wall but a landscape feature that achieves the same goal.
 - The CAC would like Sound Transit to include additional appropriate landscaping to screen the guideway.
 - The CAC would like Sound Transit to incorporate some mature trees at the time of development to soften the transition from the current environment to one that includes light rail.

4. Fencing – No concerns were expressed by the CAC. More project specific information will be included during the Design and Mitigation Permit review stage.
5. Light and Glare
 - The CAC would like to see light standards on the deck of the South Bellevue Station Garage that are as low as feasible to avoid light pollution into the neighborhoods in the vicinity.
6. Mechanical Equipment - No concerns were expressed by the CAC. More project specific information will be included during the Design and Mitigation Permit review stage.
7. Recycling and Solid Waste - No concerns were expressed by the CAC. More project specific information will be included during the Design and Mitigation Permit review stage.
8. Critical Areas
 - The CAC would like to see a plan for bird management and safety at the South Bellevue Station.
 - The CAC wants to ensure that facility lighting does not have a negative impact on the wildlife that live in and visit the adjacent nature park.
9. Use of City Right of Way - No concerns were expressed by the CAC. More project specific information will be included during the Design and Mitigation Permit review stage.

20.25M.050 Design guidelines

1. Design Intent - In addition to complying with all applicable provisions of the Southwest Bellevue Subarea Plan, the design intent for the Regional Light Rail Train system and facility segment that passes through this subarea is to contribute to the major City gateway feature that already helps define Bellevue Way and the 112th Corridor. The Regional Light Rail Train system or facility design should reflect the tree-lined boulevard that is envisioned for the subarea, and where there are space constraints within the transportation cross-section, design features such as living walls and concrete surface treatments should be employed to achieve corridor continuity. The presence of the South Bellevue park and ride and station when viewed from the neighborhood above and Bellevue Way to the west, as well as from park trails to the east, should be softened through tree retention where possible and enhanced landscaping and “greening features” such as living walls and trellises.
2. 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 the Southwest Bellevue. The Land Use Code states that the character of this area is defined by:

- The expansive Mercer Slough Nature Park;
- Historic references to truck farming of strawberries and blueberries;
- Retained and enhanced tree and landscaped areas that complement and screen transportation uses from residential and commercial development; and
- Unique, low density residential character that conveys the feeling of a small town within a larger City.

The CAC advised that the following additional context and design considerations should be considered when evaluating the East Link project in the Southwest Bellevue Subarea for context sensitivity during future CAC and permit review phases. The following items pertain to the South Bellevue Segment:

- The alignment transition from the I-90 right-of-way to the South Bellevue Station should be reflected as a “Grand Entry” into Bellevue. This gateway area defines Bellevue as the “City in a Park.” The gateway serves a number of functions, and should appropriately greet the different users that pass through it, including transit riders, vehicles, residents, bicyclists from the I-90 trail, fish (specifically salmon), and wildlife.
- The South Bellevue Park & Ride garage should incorporate green/living walls and trellis structures on the roof level in addition to interesting concrete surface treatments to break down mass and scale, and to help blend the garage into the Mercer Slough Nature Park when viewed from the neighborhoods to the west and the park to the east.

3. Additional General Design Guidelines

- The CAC would like to see a design of the South Bellevue Station and Garage that more visually relates to the city in the park vision. This may be achieved through the use of natural materials or colors that include earth tones.
- The CAC would like to see less hard edges in the design of the South Bellevue Station. One suggestion would be to incorporate more organic shapes into the design to soften hard lines.
- The CAC would like Sound Transit to evaluate the possibility of using an artistic design for the mesh screening at the South Bellevue Station Garage.

- The CAC would like to see Sound Transit evaluate the feasibility of using the sound wall on the guideway as an opportunity for artistic treatment that could tell more of the story of the area.
- The CAC would like Sound Transit to use a special form liner that reflects the special characteristics of Mercer Slough (fish, trees, etc).
- The CAC would like Sound Transit to evaluate the use of paint under the guideway for elevated segments outside of the WSDOT ROW and through the South Bellevue Station to the north towards the Winters House.
- The CAC would like Sound Transit to provide more technical information relative to noise mitigation in its' Design and Mitigation Permit submittal.
- The CAC suggest that the sound panels on the guideway offer an opportunity for color if not art on the west facing portions. Treating the west facing walls of the guideway and possibly the columns with color would help the South Bellevue Station blend into the background.
- The CAC would like to Sound Transit to expand its' color palette for those features where standard Sound Transit color options are limited.

Next Steps

The advice contained in this Advisory Document should be forwarded to Sound Transit for use in refining its design of elements and features of the East Link light rail system features in support of its Design and Mitigation Permit submittal.