

NE 130th St Light Rail Station

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Commissioners Present

Justin Clark, Acting Chair
Kim Baker
Elizabeth Conner
Azzurra Cox
Mark Johnson
Amalia Leighton
Vinita Sidhu
Elaine Wine

Non-Voting Commissioners Present

Jill Crary

Commissioners Excused

Non-Voting Commissioners Excused

Adam Amrhein

Project Description

In 2016 voters approved the addition of the substructure for a light rail station to the Lynnwood Link Extension at NE 130th St. The Lynnwood Link Extension was approved in 2008 as part of the Sound Transit 2 (ST2) ballot measure to provide light rail service between Northgate and Lynnwood. With the Sound Transit 3 (ST3) ballot measure, funding for the station was provided. The NE 130th St station will be located north of NE 130th St between 5th Ave NE and Interstate 5 and will serve a growing residential neighborhood between the Northgate and Shoreline South/145th Stations.

Meeting Summary

This is the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) second review of the NE 130th St Light Rail Station project. The purpose of this meeting was to review the schematic design phase (60% design) for the C2 package of the phased project. The C2 package includes the platform girders, slab, and canopy structure. (The C1 package, which includes the guideway columns and superstructure, has been approved as part of Lynnwood Link and is under construction. The C3 package contains the vertical conveyances, ancillary spaces, landscaping, station finishes, and street improvements.) The SDC voted, 8-0, to approve the schematic design for the NE 130th St Light Rail Station C2 package with two conditions and several recommendations. The C2 project will be reviewed again in subcommittee and the full project will be reviewed at schematic (60%) and design development (90%) phases.

Recusals and Disclosures

Adam Amrhein is recused from the project review

May 20, 2021

9:00 - 11:30 am

Project Type

CIP

Phase

Schematic Design of C2 Package

Previous Reviews[4/16/20](#)**Presenters**

Taylor Carroll, Sound Transit
 Andrea Burnett, Sound Transit
 Howard Fitzpatrick, LMN Architects
 Lyna Nget, Sound Transit
 Elizabeth Powers, O'Brien 360

Attendees

Val Batey, Sound Transit
 Steve Beadle, WSDOT
 Matt Beaulieu, WSDOT
 Lori Burchett, King County
 Patrice Carroll, OPCD
 Lucile Chich, Sound Transit
 Sean Conrad, SDCl
 Brian Elrod, HNTB
 John Evans, Sound Transit
 Robbie Frankel, King County
 Getahun Getahun, SCL
 Jaqueline Gruber, Vulcan
 John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission
 Nagheen Kamkar, CM Juarez Office
 Tim Kamper, Triunity Engineering
 Stephannie Karlsson, Sound Transit
 Kurt Kiefer, Sound Transit
 Lindsay King, SDCl
 Edward Kwitek, SDCl
 Kate Lichtenstein, Sound Transit
 Barbara Luecke, Sound Transit
 Mario Madayag, Attendee
 John Marek, SDOT
 Teri Marsh, HNTB
 Mark Murray, Sound Transit
 David Nguyen, WSP
 Abel Pacheco, Sound Transit
 Joanna Perez, Sound Transit
 Chris Saleeba, SDOT
 Gabriel Seo, SDOT
 Kate Spitzer, FAS
 Bryan Stevens, SDCl
 Clenel Williams, LMN Architects
 Darold Woodward, HNTB
 Emily Yasukochi, Sound Transit

Summary of Presentation

Taylor Carroll and Andrea Burnett of Sound Transit, Howard Fitzpatrick of LMN, Lyna Nget of HNTB, and Elizabeth Powers of O'Brien360 presented the project.

The project team presented the schedule. The project is an infill station on the Lynnwood Link Extension (LLE) approved as part of the Sound Transit 3 (ST3) plan. In 2020, the Sound Transit (ST) Board authorized C1 construction and final design of C2 and C3 in an effort to minimize service disruption for riders. At the end of 2021, the ST Board will decide whether or not to fast track construction of the remaining two packages or continue on the ST3 voter-approved timeline for service in 2031. There are three current scenarios for how the project might progress: 1. C2 may be built with LLE and C3 delayed to 2031; 2. both C2 and C3 may be built with LLE; or 3. both C2 and C3 may be delayed to 2031. Due to the pandemic-driven recession and ongoing pressures in the real estate and construction sectors of the economy, the ST Board is considering the options for the delivery of this station as part of a larger capital project realignment program.

The scope and elements of C2, the subject of this meeting, was described. The finishes are included in the C3 package, which is not under review at this meeting.

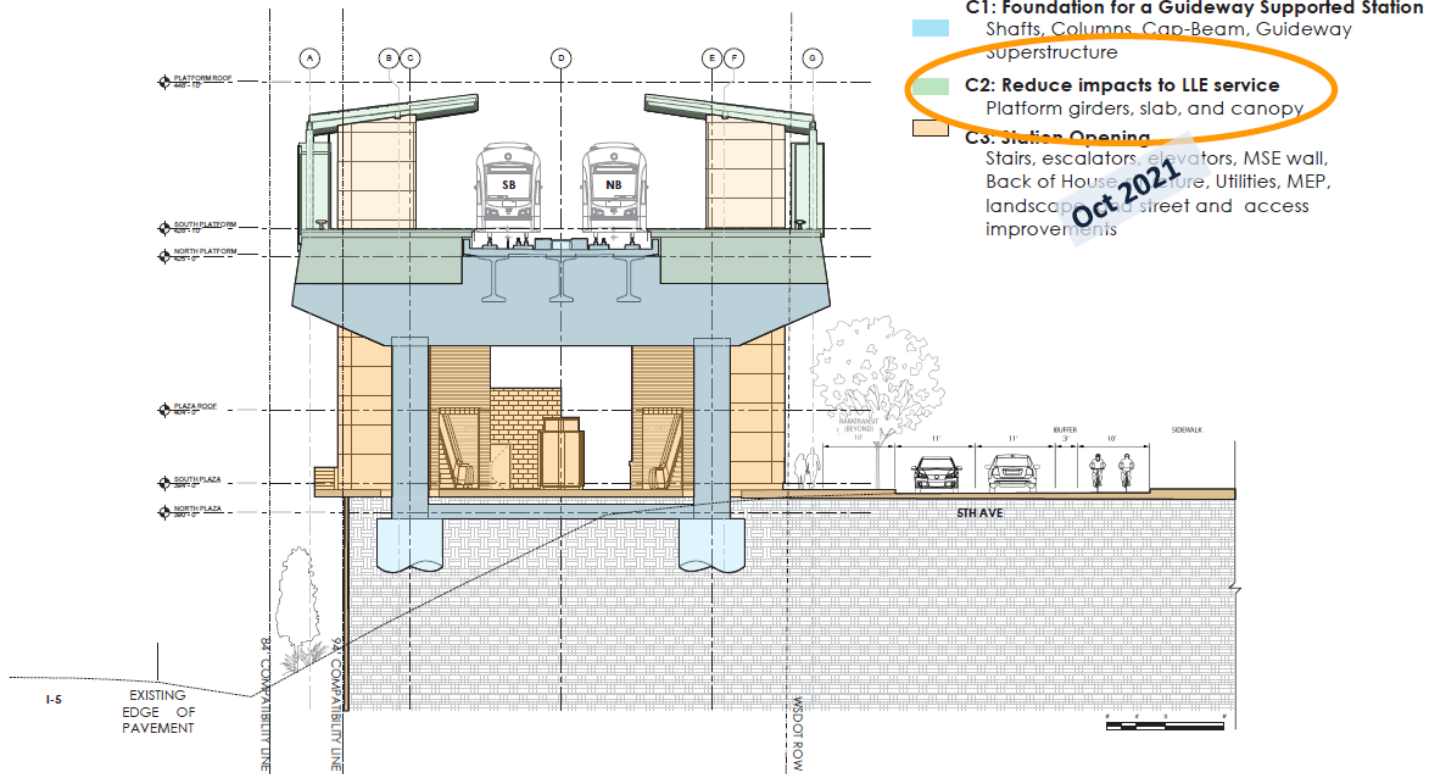
The presentation team underscored their appreciation for collaboration with WSDOT, Metro, and SDOT and how that coordination has affected station program and its integration with the abutting public realm.

The community outreach was presented. Surveys, open houses, social media, and direct HNTB contact were employed. During the COVID pandemic, the presentation team and their consultants worked with community organizations to deliver information to people electronically. They also placed information in high traffic areas such as grocery stores, and ethnic media. Their plan is to continue to work with community where they are.

Following an overview of outreach, the presentation team provided an update on station design. First, the context and its placement between two urban villages was described. The scale of the station in the urban fabric, along the freeway was shown in perspectives. Columns and fencing of the C1 phase are what will touch the ground, and the C2 phase will not add to that. (C1 permitting of Lynnwood Link did not include the SDC.) All vertical and ancillary structures will be in C3, as well as architectural elements and the plaza. The completed station, including C3, was shown for context. Following the Commissions first review in April 2020, the northern escalators were eliminated to save cost. The southern elevators were retained as they are anticipated to have higher use due to their proximity to transit and the 5th Avenue and NE 130th St intersection.

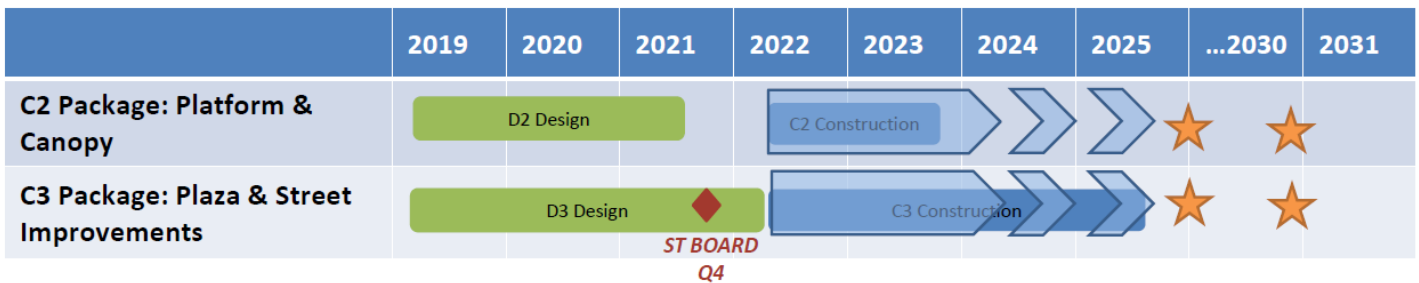
The landscape architecture was presented following the discussion of station design. The interim site design was completed as part of the C1 package. It consists of WSDOT standard seed mixes used in areas that will be disrupted by future construction. On the east side of NE 5th Ave trees and other plants will be planted along the area where associated infrastructure will be located. The C3 landscape design was shown as a preview to the next review.

The sustainability plan and program was presented. LEED BD & C: Transit Station is being used. This is one of the first projects in the world to use this system. Materials choices and pervious paving are measures that will be

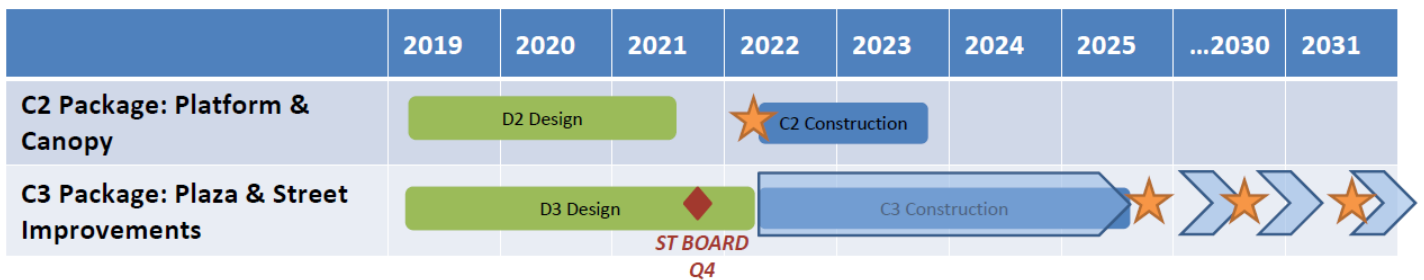


employed in the C2 phase. The C2 phase sustainability measures were presented, including how low carbon

Interim Condition Option 1: C2 & C3 Later



Interim Condition Option 2: C2 now, C3 Later



alternatives can be used.

Agency Comments

Chris Saleeba, SDOT, commented that the collaborative work between the City and Sound Transit has been good.

Rob Frankel, King County Metro, commented that the Metro interface comes mainly at D3, but he appreciates the collaboration going on already.

Public Comments

None

Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Civic Presence
- Neighborhood Integration
- Pedestrian Environment
- Non-Motorized Connections
- Community Engagement

Civic Presence

Commissioners discussed the condition of the public realm in the interim, between when D2 is built and when the remaining parts of the light rail facility are built. They expressed that given the length of time the interim condition may extend, the usual utilitarian temporary site improvements, such as fencing and hydroseeding, would not be appropriate. Commissioners expressed a desire for Sound Transit to recognize that the station, in both its unfinished and finished state, would reflect on Seattle given its position along the freeway and an arterial. Such a massive infrastructure object in this location would require more than a utilitarian solution. It would need to be integrated into the built and social fabric of the neighborhood. The station will be both a landmark from the viewpoint of the freeway and also within the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Integration

There was concern that the building would appear to be a foreign object placed in the neighborhood but not functional for the community. The conversation circled around the need to communicate to the public that the station was not abandoned after construction begin, but that it would be completed at a later date and be an asset to the community. Commissioners suggested that the Sound Transit art program might find a low cost solution to enliven the building in the interim, such as with light and color. Signage around the neighborhood might also be employed to introduce the station to the community. The interim solution might provide for layering into the permanent design.

Pedestrian Environment

Another discussion point was the concern about the pedestrian environment along the site. Commissioners expressed concern that the edge condition, with chain link fence along an unfinished roadway edge and hydroseeded expanse, would be particularly troublesome because it might be something the community would have to live with for many years. They provided ideas for how to improve this condition, such as by moving the fence back to create a more generous space for walking, and using more interesting fencing. This would be a way to bring in the human scale to such a monumentally sized structure.

Non-Motorized Connections

Commissioners discussed how pedestrians and cyclists would be drawn to the station by its visibility but then not be able to use the station. They discussed the necessity of providing a safe route for pedestrians and bikes to reach the 145th Street station while the NE 130th Street station is in its unfinished condition.

Community Engagement

The discussion was peppered with advice to connect with community. Considering meeting with community at the site. Also, consider communities like Haller Lake that will also be using the station.

Action

The SDC thanked the project team for their presentation on the schematic design for the C2 phase of the NE 130th Street Light Rail Station. The Commission appreciated the early collaboration and coordination between Sound Transit and city, county, and state agencies, and the strong sustainability strategy. The SDC voted, 8-0, to approve the schematic design for the 2 package for the NE 130th Street Light Rail Station project with the following condition:

1. Develop a more enhanced interim condition for the facility that includes:
 - i. Safe, legible pedestrian and bike connectivity to the 145th Street Station

- ii. Additional visual interest, as viewed from locations abutting the station and within view corridors, that address the implications of the interim phase of the project. Interventions that can add visual interest include changes to the placement and materials of the fencing, more robust plantings, interim art, lighting, and or the use of color.

Present conceptual ideas for this to a subcommittee of the SDC prior to permit approval from SDCl. Provide more advanced plans for the interim condition at the schematic (60%) review of the C3 package, or earlier if C3 design is postponed.

The Commission also provided the following recommendations:

1. Considering both the interim and permanent design, these are landmarks in Seattle and we want them to be something we can be proud of. Bring out elements of distinction that can tell a story. Employ the station building architecture and landscape architecture, not only the art, to do this.
2. Create a more safe and positive customer experience in the interim with the understanding that the period before the station is open is an opportunity to establish a positive presence in the neighborhood and attract future riders.
3. Use lighting or paint on the steel and other parts of the structure to make a statement and move beyond the utilitarian look of the interim building.
4. In the final designs for the facility, provide additional thoughtfulness on the guideway and station elements to bring a level of distinction commensurate with them becoming landmarks within the city landscape.
5. Engage artists earlier, for the interim design and the D3 package, to tell the story and context of the communities nearby.
6. Continue on the path of developing a strong sustainability program.
7. Coordinate and work with SDOT and other partners to support both short and long term improvements to station access from beyond the direct vicinity, including the non-motorized link along 5th Ave NE to the NE 145th St Station.
8. Sound Transit and the City are asked to consider creative means for how the Graham Street station can be delivered sooner, as the NE 130th ST station will be. Graham Street station is in a diverse community that has had community driven planning centered around this station for a long time. Building this station would deliver on the visions for equity that both agencies are working toward.