

I-5 Lid Feasibility Study Committee Work Session

December 11, 2019



City of Seattle

Objectives for Today

- Provide an update on recent work, including community outreach
- Review and provide feedback on approach to the three test cases
- Review and provide feedback on the specific assumptions for each test case
- Outline next steps and schedule



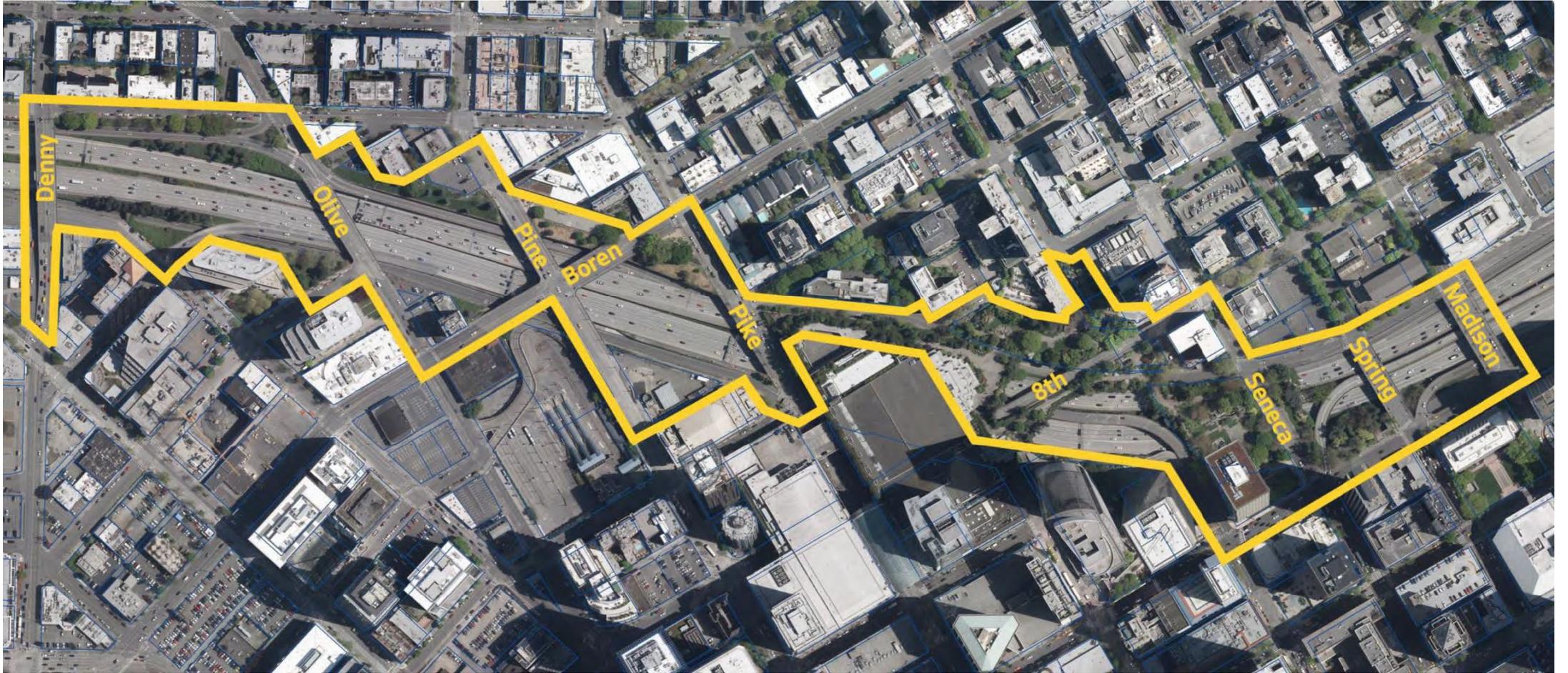
Purpose of the Study

Determine the technical and financial feasibility of developing additional “lids” over I-5

- Where and how lids could be built
- How much load could physically support
- How much they would cost
- How they could be funded and delivered



Structural Assessment Boundary



Expected Study Outcomes

- The study WILL identify key technical issues as well as financial and governance issues that would need to be addressed.
- The study WILL NOT define a “preferred alternative” or make recommendations about whether to pursue a lid project.



What We Have Learned So Far

- Lid structures are *technically* feasible in each sub-area being studied
- Load capacity of each lid segment varies based on the ability to “go to ground” and length of the necessary span
- Key constraints include on- and off-ramp structures, grade changes, maintaining vertical clearances and tying the structure directly into the surrounding urban context (there are 15 bridges and 33 retaining and/or load-bearing walls within the SAB)



Outreach and Engagement Goals

- Work with underrepresented community members to inform them of the feasibility study
- Document community members' visions, ideas and concerns for a lid over I-5
- Give them ways to keep informed and updated on the process





Meetings and Presentations

- July 17th – Community Liaisons representing outreach leads from immigrant, POC, unhoused, ESL, and disability communities
- August 14th – Five City Commissions: Women’s, LGBTQ, People with DisAbilities, Human Rights, and Immigrant and Refugee
- August 19th – Horizon House Residents’
- August 20th – Olive Tower Residents’
- October 1st – Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC)
- October 10th – Equitable Development Initiative (EDI) Advisory Board
- November 1st – Central Area Collaborative



Insights

- Each presentation or focus group offered a unique perspective and type of feedback towards the concept
 - The depth of their knowledge and subject matter expertise was not duplicated in other gatherings
- Though familiar with local area lids, most were unfamiliar with the term
- Strong majority of participants were open to concept. Significant concern about who would have voice at table



Common Themes

- **Accessibility:** Make sure it is accessible for all people (i.e. visual aids for deaf people, ramps for wheeled accessibility, lights for low vision)
- **Connectivity:** Strong expectations for direct, connected biking and walking pathways
- **Stewardship:** If public funds are spent, then public should have direct access to new land provided and that land should provide a significant public benefit
- **Programming:** Affordable housing, centralized human services, and placemaking that represents and welcomes a broader cross-section of Seattle's diversity than currently experienced in downtown core



Outreach Next Steps

- Synthesize meeting notes and draft outreach summaries for final report
- Outline recommendations for phase 2 outreach should feasibility study lead to continued consideration



Next Step: Financial Feasibility Analysis

- Amount of development (“load”) and type of development (private or public) will affect the cost of construction and financial performance over time.
- Project scope includes analyzing three scenarios to test financial performance.
- The scenarios, or test cases, are designed to answer key questions. *They do not represent desired or recommended development proposals.*



Three Proposed Test Cases

1 The Park Lid

What is the lowest capital cost lid to achieve core benefits?

2 Max Private Investment

What is the maximum potential for market-rate development to help pay for a lid?

3 Mid-Density Hybrid

How would a context-sensitive public-private mix of development affect financial performance?



Public Benefits

All the test cases would help to:

- Improve connectivity
- Increase safety and resilience
- Mitigate noise, direct exposure to pollutants and visual impacts

They would vary in delivering other core benefits, including:

- Amount of public open space and civic space
- Amount and type of affordable housing benefit



Important Caveat

The test cases do not:

- Represent development programs
- Define specific types of civic uses or desired park amenities
- Define the number of affordable housing units or a desired unit mix (just square footage)

They represent sets of assumptions to inform the analysis and answer the core questions.



1 The Park Lid

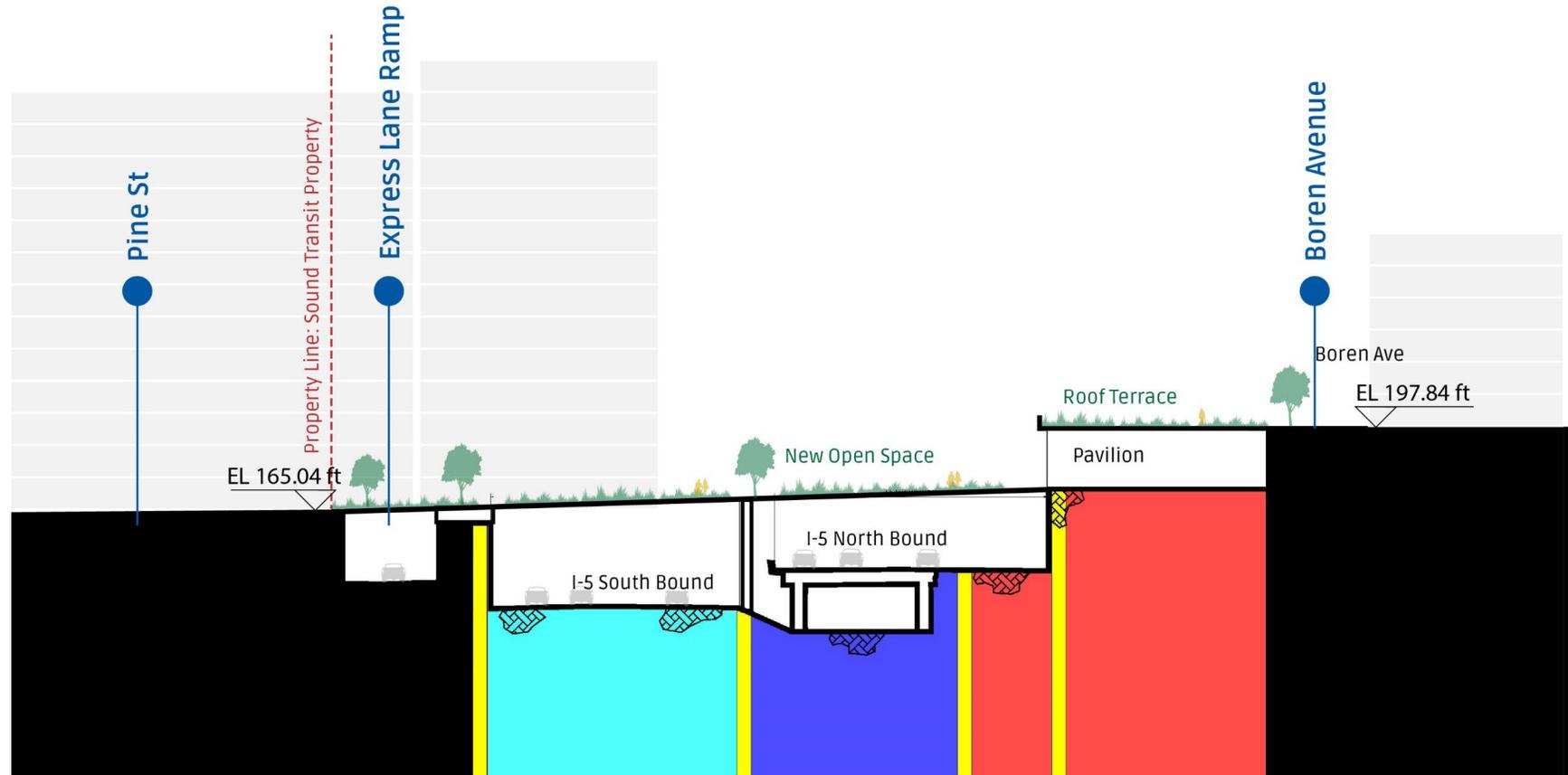
What is the lowest capital cost lid to achieve core benefits?

- Meets safety, seismic and operational requirements
- Standard park amenities
- No buildings except for “pavilion” structures to address edge conditions due to grade changes
- More substantial amenities would require additional investment
- Assumes all ramps remain



1 The Park Lid

Illustration of a "pavilion" helping address grade change



1 The Park Lid

Comparable: Mercer Island I-90 Lid



2 Max Private Investment

What is max potential for market-rate development to help pay for a lid?

- Meets safety, seismic and operational requirements; improves connectivity
- Assumes “maximum realistic” development based on load capacity and standard development requirements
- Public open space is provided but is privately owned
- Affordable housing fees create benefit; no on-site units
- Assumes all ramps remain, but “over ramp” development possible in some cases



2 Max Private Investment

Affordable housing fee assumptions

	Low Rise	Mid Rise	High Rise
Residential	\$13/s.f. (or 6% of units)	\$20/s.f. (or 9% of units)	\$33/s.f. (or 11% of units)
Commercial	\$8/s.f.	\$12/s.f.	\$15/s.f.



2 Max Private Investment

*Comparable:
Capitol Crossings lid
in Washington, DC*



3 Mid-Density Hybrid

How would a more context-sensitive, public-private mix affect financial performance?

- Meets safety, seismic and operational requirements; improves connectivity
- Reduces development intensity based on context
- Assumes 5 acres of public open space in addition to privately-owned public space
- Assumes 5% of built space dedicated to civic uses
- Assumes affordable housing (MHA) fees from market-rate development and dedication of “land” for on-site affordable housing
- Look at “all ramps remain” *and* Olive Way on- and off-ramps removed



3 Mid-Density Hybrid

- Same MHA fees on market-rate development as Test Case 2
and
- Target of 40% of total residential square footage dedicated to affordable housing (will not calculate cost of building the housing or determine specific mix of units, but will deliver "land" on the lid for its development, at no cost or deeply discounted rate)



3 Mid-Density Hybrid

Why 40%?

- It's the approx. percentage of low-income households in the lid area today (2017)

	Households w/in ~1k ft. of Study Area	%
TOTAL Households	11,731	100%
60% AMI and below	4,613	39%
30% AMI and below	2,662	23%

- 2,151 subsidized units exist within the lid area; leaving 2,500 low income households in market-rate housing and at-risk of displacement from increasing prices and rents (that will be exacerbated by construction of a lid)

3 Mid-Density Hybrid

Comparable: Although not a lid, Yesler Terrace (when completed) will contain a mix of affordable and market-rate housing with commercial space, civic uses and substantial public open spaces.



Feedback and Discussion

1. Do you have feedback on the three core questions we are using to frame the test cases?
2. Do you have feedback on the key assumptions of each test case?

If you think changes should be considered, what are they and why?



Next Steps

- Refine test cases and assumptions based on feedback; ensure alignment with the TAT and executive leadership
- Direct consultants to complete economic analysis
- TAT review of draft Technical Feasibility Memo
- Confirm date for next Study Committee meeting (Q1 2020) to review draft findings

