



Metro Bus Hubs

Phase 1 Engagement Report

King County Department of Transportation Communications

March 20, 2018

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Project overview

King County Metro Transit's Bus Hubs program will support our effort to provide fast, frequent, and reliable public transportation. Today, Metro and the City of Seattle work together to find layover spaces for buses along city streets. Growing demand for bus service will require more layover space, while increasing development needs curbside space for other uses. So Metro is creating new off-street layover facilities called bus hubs. Metro and Seattle are partnering to amend the city's design guidelines and update its Land Use Code to define bus layover facilities and include appropriate development standards to help them fit into the north downtown, South Lake Union, and Uptown areas. Our first bus hub will be built on the east side of Eastlake Avenue E, between Harrison Street and Roy Street.

We did our first phase of outreach and engagement for this project from October 2017 through early February 2018. We focused on the north downtown area, where the first bus hub site will be built. Our outreach team informed the public about the need for off-street layover sites and for a Seattle code change. We also asked for input on the design standards to help inform the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections Land Use Code amendment for bus hubs, and on the specific design of the Eastlake Bus Hub.

This report summarizes our Phase 1 outreach and the feedback we received.

Outreach methods

We used a variety of methods to reach out to key organizations and community groups in Seattle's north downtown area as well as the general public. We targeted residents, businesses, and stakeholder organizations in Belltown, Uptown/Lower Queen Anne, Denny Triangle, South Lake Union, and north Queen Anne.

How we told people about the opportunity to participate

- Presentations and discussion with key community groups
- Press release issued jointly with Metro and Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections
- Project websites (Metro and Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections)
- Electronic alerts to subscribers (Metro and Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections)
- Metro social media channels (Twitter and Facebook)
- Seattle Department of Construction social media (Twitter)
- Door-to-door outreach and flyer distribution
- Metro Matters blog
- Seattle Department of Construction blog
- Emails to stakeholder organizations with request to distribute the information

How we gathered feedback

- Presentations and discussion with key community groups
- Online open house with two distinct surveys
- Door-to-door outreach and in-person conversations with businesses

Materials

- PowerPoint presentation
- Fact sheets (Metro and Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections)
- Eastlake site design survey
- Land Use Code survey

Equity and social justice

Metro, the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections, and the Seattle Department of Transportation reached out to stakeholder groups that represent residents in north downtown neighborhoods. These residents include people with low incomes, people with disabilities, seniors, and people who are transit-dependent (see a full list of organizations below). The census block areas affected by this project did not reach the threshold for King County's translation policy (5 percent or more of the population speaking a language other than English), but we offered translations upon request.

Presentations to community groups

The Metro outreach team identified key community groups that represent residents and businesses in project areas. Starting in October, we partnered with City of Seattle staff members to present to these groups.

Format and presenters

For each presentation, a small Metro outreach team and at least one Seattle staff member gave a 20-30-minute presentation, followed by discussion and questions.

Staff members typically in attendance

- Tristan Cook, Metro, outreach lead
- Grace Carlson, Metro, outreach lead
- Sally Turner, Metro, Eastlake Bus Hub program manager
- Steve Crosley, Metro, Bus Hub project manager
- Elizabeth Weldin, Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection, Land Use Code lead
- Kate Reizner, S&A Communications, outreach consultant

Other staff members who participated

- Meghan Shepard, Seattle Department of Transportation
- Candida Lorenzana, Seattle Department of Transportation
- Jim Holmes, Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development
- Patrice Carroll, Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development
- Karen Ko, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods
- Bill Bryant, Metro

Key community groups

We gave presentations to the following key community groups in the project area. (Those marked with an asterisk did not respond to multiple presentation offers, so we sent them materials via email.)

- Downtown Seattle Association
- Cascade Neighborhood Council
- South Lake Union Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce*
- Downtown District Council
- Uptown Alliance
- Vulcan
- Amazon*
- REI
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center*
- Belltown Business Association
- Belltown Community Council*
- Commute Seattle
- Transit Riders Union
- King County Transit Advisory Board
- Seattle Transit Advisory Board
- Transportation Choices Coalition
- South Lake Union Community Council
- South Lake Union Greenways*
- Amalgamated Transit Union Local 587
- Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board
- Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board*
- Seattle Transit Advisory Board
- Mirabella Seattle (senior living)

What we heard

In general, community groups were happy to receive early notification about the downtown Seattle Bus Hubs program and the Eastlake Bus Hub project. Most offered positive feedback and understood the benefits of taking bus layovers off the street. Groups near the Eastlake project site were particularly pleased to understand the design possibilities for the facility. Groups with constituents or interests in neighboring communities (e.g. the Cascade Neighborhood Council, SLU Community Council, and Belltown Business Association) were pleased that off-street layovers would potentially free up public right-of-way and relieve congestion on their neighborhood streets.

General themes from the briefings

- Curiosity about potential for increased traffic congestion on Eastlake Ave E once buses line up there
- Priority interest in bus operator safety and convenience for breaks
- Emphasis on synchronizing with Seattle's North Downtown Mobility Action Plan

- Interest in how Metro will partner with private developers for potential co-developed bus hubs
- Interest in maintaining safety and visibility for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Interest in making sure that bus hubs do not divide the natural flow of communities or neighborhoods or make it more difficult to move through the city

Detailed comments and questions from organizations are in the meeting summary for each presentation.

See accompanying documents for an example of a PowerPoint presentation and a presentation summary document.

Online open house

Metro determined that an online open house would be the most effective way to reach a broad cross-section of community members and general public. The purpose of the online open house was to educate the community about the need for bus layovers, explain the benefit of bus hubs, and seek feedback related to both the Land Use Code changes and design of the Eastlake project.

Promotion

The online open house was open from January 17-31, 2018. It was promoted via the following methods:

- Presentations and discussion with key community groups
- Postcards mailed to 33,000+ addresses in Belltown, Uptown, Denny Triangle, and South Lake Union
- Metro Operations Bulletin (to notify bus drivers)
- Email sent to Metro's Bus Hubs group (125 subscribers)
- Email sent to Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections bus layover group subscribers
- Email sent to key community groups
- [Seattle Department of Transportation blog post](#)
- [Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections blog post](#)
- [Metro Matters blog post](#) (139 views)
- [Metro tweets](#) (5 posts between January 17 and January 31; 23,000 impressions; 127 clicks)
- Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections tweets (1 post; 36 retweets; 1,377 impressions; 16 clicks)
- Door-to-door outreach to nearly 30 businesses around the corridor to share project information, provide copies of the Eastlake site design survey, and promote the online open house
- Press release issued jointly by Metro and the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections

Media coverage

- The Urbanist, November 16, 2017: www.theurbanist.org/2017/11/16/metro-proposing-bus-hubs-off-street-layover-space

- The Urbanist, January 18, 2018: www.theurbanist.org/2018/01/18/seattle-king-county-metro-solicit-feedback-bus-hubs

See appendix A for examples of promotional materials. See accompanying documents for door-to-door outreach plan.

Format

The online open house was built on an interactive web tool called *InfoCommunity*. This tool allows users to explore the site at their leisure, much like a website. The Metro Bus Hubs online open house included six tabs, or pages, of information. Written information, photos, sketch renderings, and two community priority surveys were available on the site.

See accompanying documents for PDF version of online open house content.

Surveys

The first survey offered three questions related to bus hub features in general. The results will support Seattle's effort to amend its design guidelines and update its Land Use Code to define bus layover facilities and include appropriate development standards for fitting these facilities into the north downtown, South Lake Union, and Uptown areas. The second survey asked questions specific to the features of the future Eastlake site. The results will help guide the design of the Eastlake Bus Hub.

Land Use survey

This survey asked three simple questions:

1. What features would help a layover facility fit into South Lake Union, Uptown, and the area north of downtown Seattle?
2. What do you think is most important in designing a layover facility?
3. Do you have any concerns about a bus layover facility?

Eastlake design survey

This survey encouraged users to provide their preferences on site features such as paving, onsite operations offices, screening, and other amenities. Users were prompted with photo examples of the different options. Questions asked the following:

1. For each feature, which option do you prefer?
2. Which features are most important to you and why? (Rank 1-3, with 1 being most important)
3. *Optional:* demographic questions

What we heard

Summary of feedback

- 1,518 users clicked through the site.
- 218 took the Eastlake survey.
- 78 took the Land Use Code survey.

Where respondents live or work

In general, survey respondents were clustered in zip codes in or around the program area.

- 98109 (32)
- 98121 (21)

Some respondents listed zip codes in other neighborhoods.

- 98103 (Fremont, Green Lake, Greenwood) (18)
- 98117 (north Ballard) (10)

See the raw data for a complete breakdown of respondents by zip code.

Land Use survey results (78 responses)

The purpose of this survey was to understand the community's general sentiments about off-street layover facilities and get a sense of which design features are most important to people when they think about a bus hub being built in their community.

Question 1 asked respondents which bus hub features are most important to them *in general*. The options offered were: **screening, lighting, landscaping**, and **other** (with space for open-ended explanation).

- Landscaping – 57 respondents chose this feature as most important
- Lighting – 48 respondents chose this feature as most important
- Screening – 45 respondents chose this feature as most important
- Other – 16 respondents chose another feature as most important (*See raw data for descriptions of what “other” features are important to respondents. Highlights include artwork, housing, retail space, and seating.*)

Question 2 asked respondents to describe what is most important to them in the design of a bus hub facility. This was an open-ended question.

- 67 responses
- Comment themes:
 - **Comfort for bus drivers** — Ensure adequate restrooms, rest space, privacy, safety, etc. (13 comments mentioned the word “driver”)
 - **Safety** — Including personal safety for all, traffic safety, and pedestrian and bike safety (18 comments related to safety)
 - **Pedestrian and bike friendly** — Ensuring that buses can run on time without compromising the safety of nearby pedestrians and bicyclists (14 comments)
 - **Fit with neighborhood** — Desire for minimal impact, landscaping, blending with the neighborhood, etc. (12 comments)

- **Pollution mitigation** — Ensuring reduction/elimination of noise or environmental pollution (4 comments)

Question 3 asked respondents to describe any concerns they have about bus hub facilities. This was an open-ended question.

- 59 responses
- Comment themes:
 - **Safety** — Including personal safety for all, traffic safety, safety from criminal activity, and pedestrian and bike safety (15 comments)
 - **Congestion and parking removal** (6 comments)
 - **Pollution mitigation** — Ensuring reduction/elimination of noise or environmental pollution (10 comments)
 - **Infrastructure** — Concerns about impact on already construction-heavy city (4 comments)

Eastlake design survey (218 responses)

The purpose of this survey was to understand public sentiment about the Eastlake Bus Hub project. Questions 1 and 2 are outlined below. Question 3 focused on demographic data. See *raw data for more information*.

Question 1 asked respondents to choose among three options for each of five design features (paving, onsite operations facilities, screening at the sidewalk, retaining wall along I-5, and other site amenities for the neighborhood).

The following information reflects the top option chosen for each feature. Percentage breakdowns are of the total responses to each question (total responses do not include blanks).

See accompanying documents for raw data, which includes full list of comments related to each response.

Paving (209 responses):

- **Colored concrete – 50% of responses** (nearly a quarter of respondents preferred plain concrete and nearly a quarter preferred textured concrete)
- *Comment themes:* Modern; more visible; adds color to grey Seattle days; cheerful; visual interest

Onsite operations facility (207 responses):

- **Artistic – 41% of responses**
- *Comment themes:* Art tied to community; community impact; fun; inspiring; color; community murals

Screening at sidewalk (205 responses):

- **Vegetation only – 50% of responses**
- *Comment themes:* cost effective; least obtrusive; more visibility; friendly; living; natural

Retaining wall (along I-5) texture (208 responses):

- **Vegetation from top of wall – 62% of responses**
- *Comment themes:* green is pretty; more vegetation; discourages graffiti; absorbs pollution and noise; natural

Neighborhood amenities (192 responses)

- **Seating – 61% of responses**
- *Comment themes:* weather protection; drinking fountain; garden; rest areas

Question 1 summary: Respondents prefer bright, colorful concrete and comfort stations that stand out rather than blend in. Vegetation and natural, plant-based screening is preferred over physical barriers or textured or painted walls. Seating is the preferred neighborhood amenity.

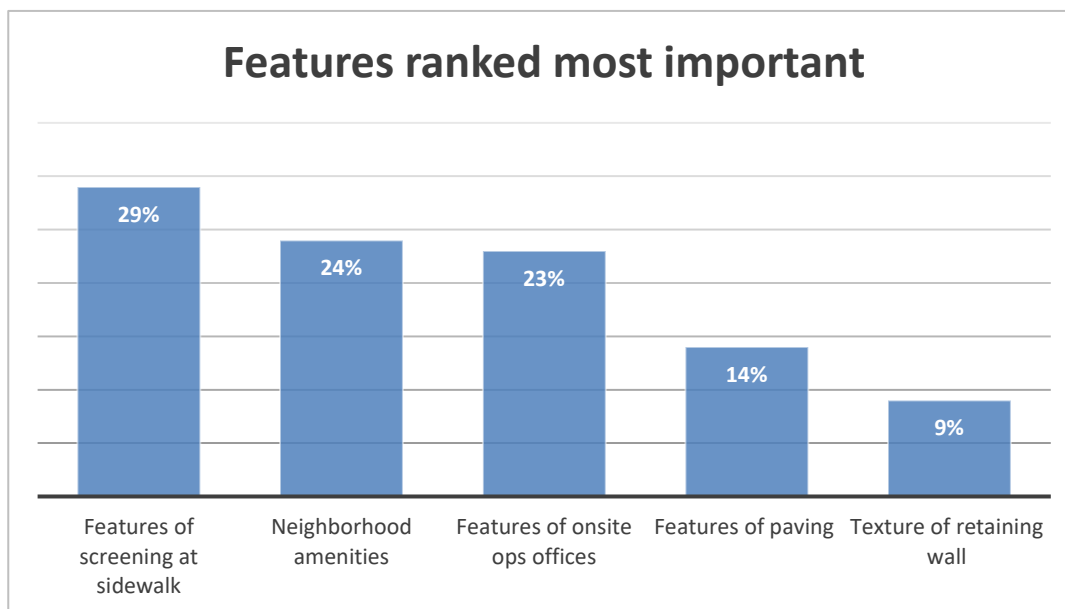
EASTLAKE DESIGN FEEDBACK:

The community weighed in on the future Eastlake site, choosing between three options for each of the following features:

The community prefers:

PAVING		Colorful paving on the ground
ONSITE OPERATIONS FACILITIES		Artistic exterior for the onsite operations facilities
SIDEWALK SCREENING		Screening at sidewalk made of vegetation
I-5 RETAINING WALL		I-5 retaining wall covered with vegetation
NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES		Seating outside the site for passersby

Question 2 asked respondents to rank from 1 to 3 (1 being most important) which features are most important and why. The following data is ranked from highest to lowest by the number of first choices each feature received out of the total number of responses (192) to this question.



Features of screening at sidewalk between off-street layover space and Eastlake Avenue E

- 56 out of the 192 (29 percent) chose features of screening at sidewalk as their top priority
- 136 of the 192 (71 percent) chose features of screening at sidewalk among their top three

Neighborhood amenities

- 47 out of the 192 (24 percent) chose neighborhood amenities as their top priority
- 102 out of the 192 (53 percent) chose neighborhood amenities among their top three

Features of onsite operations offices

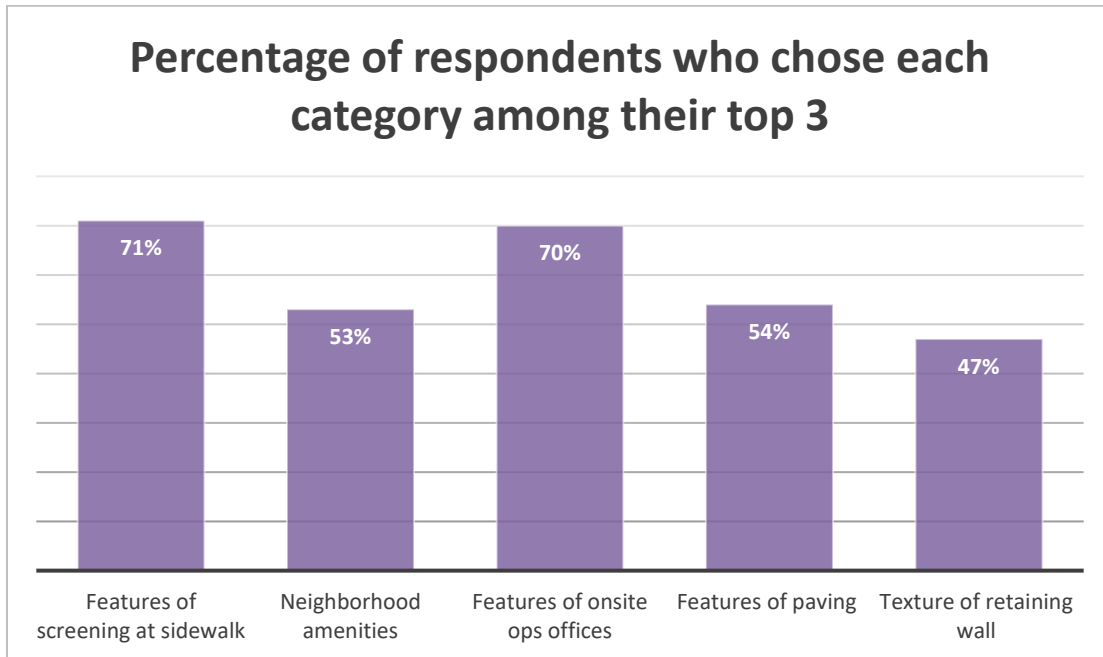
- 44 out of the 192 (23 percent) chose features of an onsite operation office (such as modern, classic, or artistic siding) as their top priority
- 135 of the 192 (70 percent) chose features of onsite operations offices among their top three

Paving features

- 27 out of 192 (14 percent) chose paving features as their top priority
- 103 of the 192 (54 percent) chose it among their top three

Texture of retaining wall (along I-5)

- 18 of the 192 (9 percent) chose texture of the retaining wall along I-5 as their top priority
- 90 of the 192 (47 percent) chose texture of the retaining wall along I-5 among their top three



Who we heard from

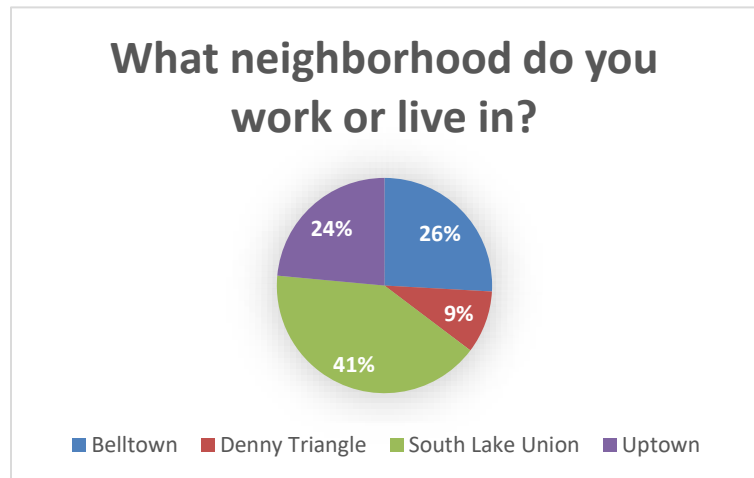
All 218 respondents submitted answers to the optional demographic questions. Highlights include:

Area of residence or employment

- 98109 (32 respondents)
- 98121 (21 respondents)
- 98119 (11 respondents)
- 98104 (8 respondents)
- 98103 (11 respondents)

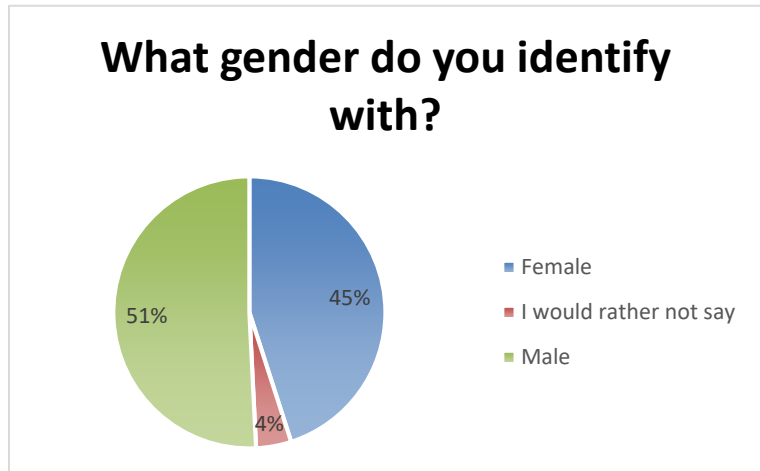
Age of respondents

- 6 percent 24 and younger
- 46 percent 25-44
- 27 percent 45-65
- 8 percent 65 and older
- 14 percent prefer not to say



Gender

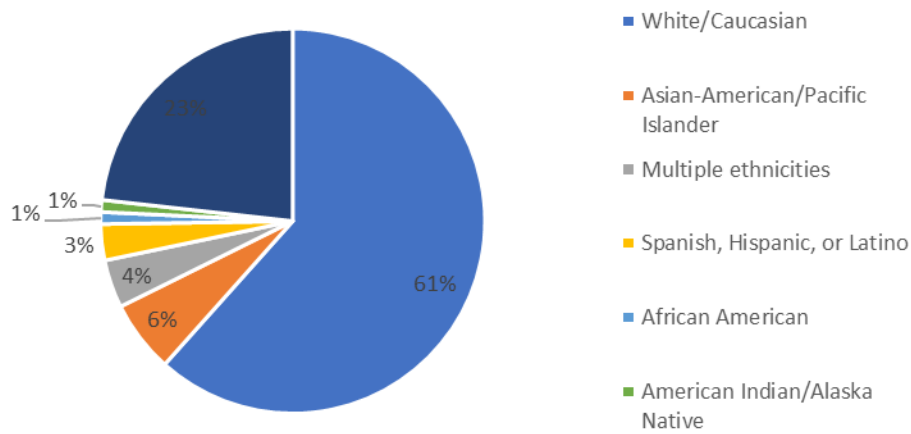
- 51 percent identified as women
- 45 percent identified as men



Disability

- 12 percent of respondents reported a disability (physical, hearing, vision, or cognitive)

Race and ethnicity

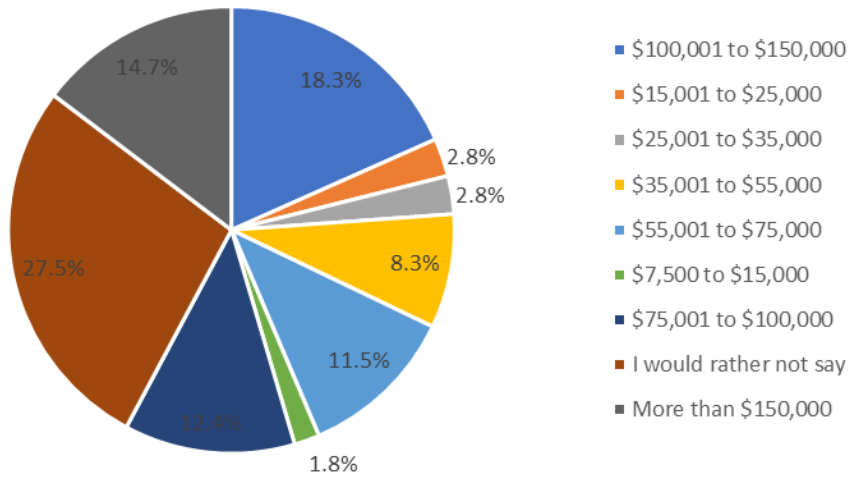


Primary spoken language

- 4 percent primarily spoke a language other than English

Bus Hubs Phase 1 Engagement Report
King County Metro Transit

Annual income



Appendix

Post card front and back

INTRODUCING METRO BUS HUBS

HELPING OUR BUSES STAY ON TIME

After finishing their trips, Metro buses wait a few minutes before starting their next trips. These planned layovers help buses start their next trips on time and let bus drivers take their breaks.


In downtown Seattle, buses lay over in curbside spaces along city streets. New off-street layover facilities, called bus hubs, will free street space and provide reliable break areas for bus drivers.

have a say Our first hub will be next to I-5 on Eastlake Avenue E
Learn more and weigh in on design features.

Visit our online open house (Jan. 17–31)
www.kingcounty.gov/metro/bus-hubs/openhouse

LAND USE CODE UPDATE: Metro and the City of Seattle are partnering to amend Seattle's Land Use Code to allow for off-street bus hubs. Learn more at www.kingcounty.gov/metro/bus-hubs/code

CONTACT US: communityrelations@kingcounty.gov | 206-477-3840



INTRODUCING METRO BUS HUBS

HELPING OUR BUSES STAY ON TIME

VISIT OUR ONLINE OPEN HOUSE (JAN. 17–31)
www.kingcounty.gov/metro/bus-hubs/openhouse





KSC TR 0824
201 S Jackson St
Seattle, WA 98104-3856

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
Seattle, WA
Permit No 6966

Alternate formats/translations available on request:
206-477-3840

Eastlake design survey – printed version for door-to-door outreach

King County Metro Bus Hubs EASTLAKE DESIGN SURVEY

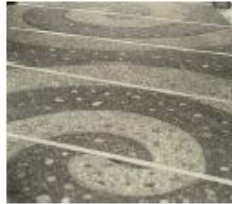
1 For each feature, which option do you prefer?

Paving

Plain concrete



Textured concrete



Colored concrete



What do you like about the type of feature you chose?

Onsite operations offices

Modern



Classic



Artistic



What do you like about the type of feature you chose?

Screening at sidewalk in front of Eastlake site

Vegetation only



Vegetation with a low screen



Vegetation with a tall vertical screen



What do you like about the type of feature you chose?

Retaining wall (along I-5) texture

Vegetation from top of wall



Texture



Art pattern



What do you like about the type of feature you chose?

Visit our online open house, open until Jan. 31, to learn more: metrobushubs.infocommunity.org

Bus Hubs Phase 1 Engagement Report
King County Metro Transit

Neighborhood amenities

Lending library



Seating



Educational signage



Other amenity ideas

2 Which features are most important to you?

We will work to make the Eastlake site representative of the community it serves. Rank top 3 from 1–3, with 1 being favorite, and tell us why.

- Features of paving
- Features of onsite operations offices
- Features of screening at sidewalk in front of Eastlake site
- Texture of retaining wall (along I-5)
- Neighborhood amenities

Why these features are important to me:

3 Demographics and household information *(optional)*

What is your ZIP code?

- 98104
- 98109
- 98119
- 98121
- Other (please specify):

What neighborhood do you live or work in?

- Uptown
- Denny Triangle
- South Lake Union
- Belltown
- Other (please specify):

What is your gender identity?

- Female
- Male
- I would rather not say
- Other (please specify):

What is your age?

- 15 or younger
- 16-17
- 18-19
- 20-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75 or older
- I would rather not say

If you have what you consider to be a disability, please indicate what kind (check all that apply).

- Vision
- Hearing
- Cognitive
- Mobility
- Intellectual or developmental
- Physical
- Mental health diagnosis
- None
- I would rather not say
- Other (please specify):

Do you consider yourself... (check all that apply)

- Asian-American/Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Black or African-American
- Spanish, Hispanic, Latino (Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, or Latino)
- Multiple ethnicities
- White or Caucasian
- I would rather not say
- Other (please specify):

What is the primary language you speak at home?

- Amharic
- Arabic
- Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese, etc.)
- English
- Korean
- Oromo
- Russian
- Spanish
- Somali
- Tagalog
- Tigrinya
- Ukrainian
- Vietnamese
- I would rather not say
- Other (please specify):

What is your annual household income?

- Less than \$7,500
- \$7,500 to \$15,000
- \$15,001 to \$25,000
- \$25,001 to \$35,000
- \$35,001 to \$55,000
- \$55,001 to \$75,000
- \$75,001 to \$100,000
- \$100,001 to \$150,000
- More than \$150,000
- I don't know
- I would rather not say



After finishing their trips, Metro buses often wait for a few minutes before starting their next trips. These planned layovers are important. They help late buses start their next trips on time. Layovers also allow bus drivers to take their breaks, helping them stay alert behind the wheel.

Today, Metro and the City of Seattle work together to find layover spaces for buses along city streets. But the growing demand for bus service means more buses will need to lay over between trips. Meanwhile the city is growing too, and has other uses for its on-street spaces.

So Metro plans to create new off-street facilities, called bus hubs, for buses to use while getting ready for their next trips. We'll create our first hubs north of downtown Seattle, where many of our bus routes start or end their trips.

What will Metro bus hubs be like?

Some will be designed for use by buses only. Others may combine bus layovers with other uses, like shopping, restaurants, offices, or housing. Some may be needed only for a limited time, like during major construction or as light rail service is being extended. Others will be permanent.

Benefits of bus hubs

- + Help keep buses on time
- + Free street space for other uses
- + Move "out of service" buses into off-street hubs instead of scattering them around city streets
- + Provide safe and reliable restrooms and break areas for bus drivers
- + Support future extensions of bus service to new neighborhoods

Metro bus hubs will free street space for other uses





Seattle Land Use Code

Metro and the City of Seattle are working together to update Seattle's Land Use Code to allow off-street bus layover facilities. The city needs to create standards for fitting the facilities into neighborhoods, and establish a permitting process for them. We expect this process for the area north of downtown Seattle to be finished in mid-2018. (Learn more at www.seattle.gov/DPD/codesrules/changestocode/buslayover)

Our first site: Eastlake

We're already working to design and build our first bus hub, a permanent, surface-level facility on the east side of Eastlake Avenue E. It will be on state-owned land next to Interstate 5,

between Roy and Republican streets. Some buses are already using on-street space there for layovers.

Public outreach to get feedback about the design of this hub will begin in early 2018. We expect the finished Eastlake Bus Hub to open in 2020.

Next sites

We're also working to find sites for more Metro bus hubs north of downtown Seattle. Before we choose another site, we'll reach out to nearby communities for public input.

Contact us

Tristan Cook
community relations planner
tristan.cook@kingcounty.gov
206-263-0929

have a say

Input from the communities we serve is an important part of Metro's planning process. We look forward to working with each neighborhood as we site and design these new facilities to fit in with their surroundings.

Visit our online open house, open until Jan. 31, to learn more and take a short survey:
metrobus hubs.infocommunity.org



Learn more
www.kingcounty.gov/metro/bus-hubs

Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections land use fact sheet



Seattle Department of
Construction & Inspections

Center City Layover Project

SDCI, King County Metro, and SDOT are working together on potential legislation that would:

- Define bus layover facilities in the Land Use Code
- Provide a process for permitting those facilities
- Include appropriate standards to help them fit into the North Downtown, South Lake Union, and Uptown neighborhoods

Layover facilities house Metro buses that have finished one trip and not yet started their next one. These spaces are essential to enable buses to stay on schedule. Layovers also allow drivers to take breaks and use the restroom. Metro uses many layover sites throughout the city and county. Some are on-street and others are in off-street facilities such as transit centers.

By 2040, Metro expects added bus service to increase need for layover space by 50 percent. At the same time, development, deliveries, and increasing traffic in and near the downtown Seattle core will be competing for on-street space. Metro is beginning to plan and design new off-street bus layover facilities in this area.

New off-street bus layover facilities are likely to be dedicated temporary or permanent ground-level facilities. It's also possible that a permanent layover area would be part of a mixed-use facility where it shares space with housing, retail, or offices.

The Goals of the Center City Layover Project are to:

- Improve bus schedule reliability
- Free up on-street curb space that can be used for short-term parking, loading, or vehicle travel
- Provide clean, safe, facilities for bus drivers that fit in with the surrounding neighborhoods



Next Steps:

- Fall 2017: Metro and SDCI websites launch; stakeholder meetings begin
- Early 2018: Draft legislation provided for public review; SEPA decision
- Spring 2018: The City Council's Planning, Land Use, and Zoning (PLUZ) Committee will likely hold deliberations on the legislation.

Legislation Questions: Elizabeth Weldin, 206-233-2537, elizabeth.weldin@seattle.gov

Legislation Website: www.seattle.gov/DPD/codesrules/changestocode/bustlayover