

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT:

East Link: Review and discuss the *112th Avenue Light Rail Options Concept Design report* and the *Evaluation of Hospital Station Options report*.

STAFF CONTACT:

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Transportation Department

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

POLICY ISSUES:

On April 22, the Sound Transit Board revised their preliminary preferred alternative for the East Link Project. The revised preliminary preferred alternative included the B2M option in South Bellevue, travelling along Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue Southeast from I-90 to downtown Bellevue. The City and Sound Transit have collaborated to evaluate six alternatives for the routing of light rail on 112th Avenue. Policy considerations related to each of the alternatives include urban design integration, traffic operations, noise and visual impacts, displacements and construction impacts.

Additionally, Sound Transit has evaluated four station location options for the Hospital Station, located near the intersection of the BNSF corridor and NE 8th Street. Policy considerations related to the station location include access to employment sites, supporting implementation of adopted land use plans in Wilburton, property impacts, and environmental impacts.

The City Council has articulated its preferences and policy direction regarding the East Link Project through its communications to Sound Transit, amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, and parallel planning processes. These City actions provide the basis for continued advocacy for City preferences and cooperative project development with Sound Transit.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL:

- Action
- Discussion
- Information

Sound Transit and City staff will present the findings of the *112th Avenue Light Rail Options Concept Design report* and the *Evaluation of Hospital Station Options report* for Council questions and discussion. Staff will return to Council on July 19 for further discussion of the options and provide opportunity for Council to express its preferences on the design choices. Also on July 19, staff will present the findings of City-initiated studies of the B7 alternative.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Sound Transit has been working for several years to develop the East Link light rail project and the City has been involved throughout that process to represent Bellevue's interests. The voter approved project will connect Bellevue with Overlake, Mercer Island and Seattle, as well as areas in north and south King County when it opens in 2020/21. Sound Transit is responsible for project development and delivery and is currently focused on completion of environmental review and preliminary engineering. The City is actively involved and seeks to influence the alignment and design to reflect City goals and objectives.

Sound Transit's April 2010 revised preference (Attachment 2) is largely consistent with the City's in the Bel-Red Corridor and downtown Bellevue. In Bel-Red, the preference is the D2A alternative. In downtown, the preference is the C9T 110th Avenue NE tunnel alternative, with the C11A 108th Avenue NE at-grade alternative also advancing in case funding for the C9T alternative does not materialize. In South Bellevue, the Sound Transit Board identified the B2M option as the preferred alternative as a means of achieving \$75-100 million in cost savings necessary to advance the C9T tunnel option in downtown. The Bellevue City Council's preference in South Bellevue is the B7 option.

The current estimate for the funding gap for the C9T alternative is approximately \$300 million. In March 2010, the City Council transmitted a non-binding term sheet to the Sound Transit Board outlining potential City financial contributions and committing to negotiate in good faith to find project cost savings and enter into an interlocal agreement for specific financial contributions from the City.

The Board directed Sound Transit staff to analyze design options for the B2M routing on 112th Avenue and requested City participation in this evaluation. Sound Transit and City staff identified six options for public consideration:

- 1) Center running to Main Street Tunnel
- 2) Westside running to Main Street Tunnel
- 3) Center running to NE 2nd Street Tunnel
- 4) Eastside running to NE 2nd Street Tunnel
- 5) Center running to at-grade
- 6) Westside running to at-grade.

Sound Transit produced the *112th Avenue Light Rail Options Design report* (provided to Council June 24, 2010), with review and input from City staff. Sound Transit and City staff will present the results of this analysis to Council.

Concurrently, the City and Sound Transit have collaborated on a public engagement effort to seek input into the design and selection of the B2M alternatives. Outreach efforts include:

- Door-to-door outreach by Sound Transit staff (late May)
- Stakeholder meetings with property owners and neighborhood groups (May – July)
- Community drop-in sessions (late May and early June)
- Three design workshops (June 15, 29, and July 7)
- An open house including the B2M options and the Bellevue Way design (July 14).

The Sound Transit Board has identified July 22 as the target date to identify which of the six B2M options to advance into preliminary engineering. Key dates leading to this decision point include:

June 15	Community Workshop #1 – Introduction and discussion of 112 th Options
June 29	Community Workshop #2 – Evaluating 112 th Options
July 6	Council briefing
July 7	Community Workshop #3 – Identifying community preferences
July 14	Open House – 112 th options, Bellevue Way design, South Bellevue Station
July 15	Sound Transit Board Capital Committee makes initial recommendations on B2M option
July 19	Council Briefing and opportunity for Council recommendation of preference
July 22	Sound Transit Board identifies preferred B2M design alternative.

Attachment #3 provides a complete East Link schedule through the record of decision.

City and Sound Transit staff have also been working collaboratively on four Hospital Station design options, in response to the Sound Transit Board of Directors April 22 motion. This motion called for an evaluation of station location design variations. As a result, four options have been identified and evaluated:

- Option A – North of NE 8th Street (as assumed in the East Link Draft Environmental Impact Statement), an elevated station immediately north of NE 8th Street in the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad right of way (BNSF).
- Option B – Span NE 8th Street, an elevated station spanning NE 8th Street in the BNSF corridor with station access both north and south of NE 8th Street.
- Option C – South of NE 10th Street, an elevated station approximately 300 feet north of NE 8th Street in the BNSF corridor.
- Option D – At-Grade North of NE 10th Street, an at-grade station approximately 800 feet north of NE 8th Street in the BNSF corridor.

The *Evaluation of Hospital Station Options report* was provided to Council on June 24, 2010. This report discusses the options in detail and summarizes key factors for each alternative, such as potential business displacements, access to hospitals and other nearby businesses and residences, and other considerations.

As with the 112th Avenue options, the Sound Transit Board of Directors is expected to select a preferred alternative for the Hospital Station on July 22.

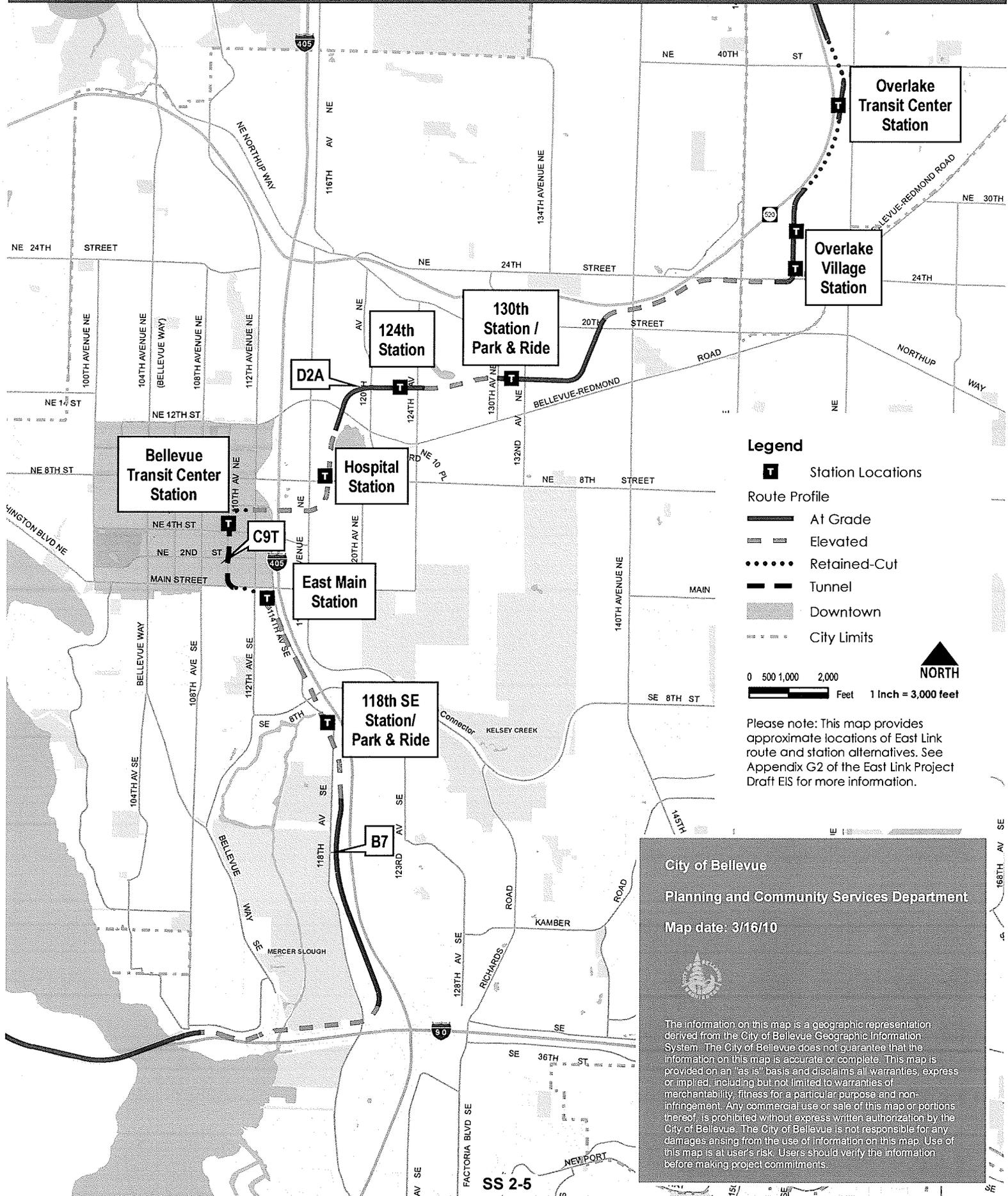
City staff will return to Council on July 19 to support the Council's discussion of the 112th and Hospital Station options.

Sound Transit is expected to release a supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement in fall 2010. This will include a detailed impact analysis for the B2M option from I-90 to Main Street, the C9T and C11A downtown options, the Hospital Station (if different than the current preference) and design variations incorporated into the Bel-Red Corridor, including a retained cut 120th Station and the revised Overlake Village Station adjacent to the SR 520 corridor.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Bellevue's Preferred East Link Light Rail Route Map (March 2010)
- 2) Sound Transit's East Link Project Preferred Alternative Map (April 2010)
- 3) East Link Schedule

Bellevue's Preferred East Link Light Rail Route B7-C9T-D2A



Legend
 Station Locations

Route Profile
 At Grade
 Elevated
 Retained-Cut
 Tunnel
 Downtown
 City Limits

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet 1 Inch = 3,000 feet

Please note: This map provides approximate locations of East Link route and station alternatives. See Appendix G2 of the East Link Project Draft EIS for more information.

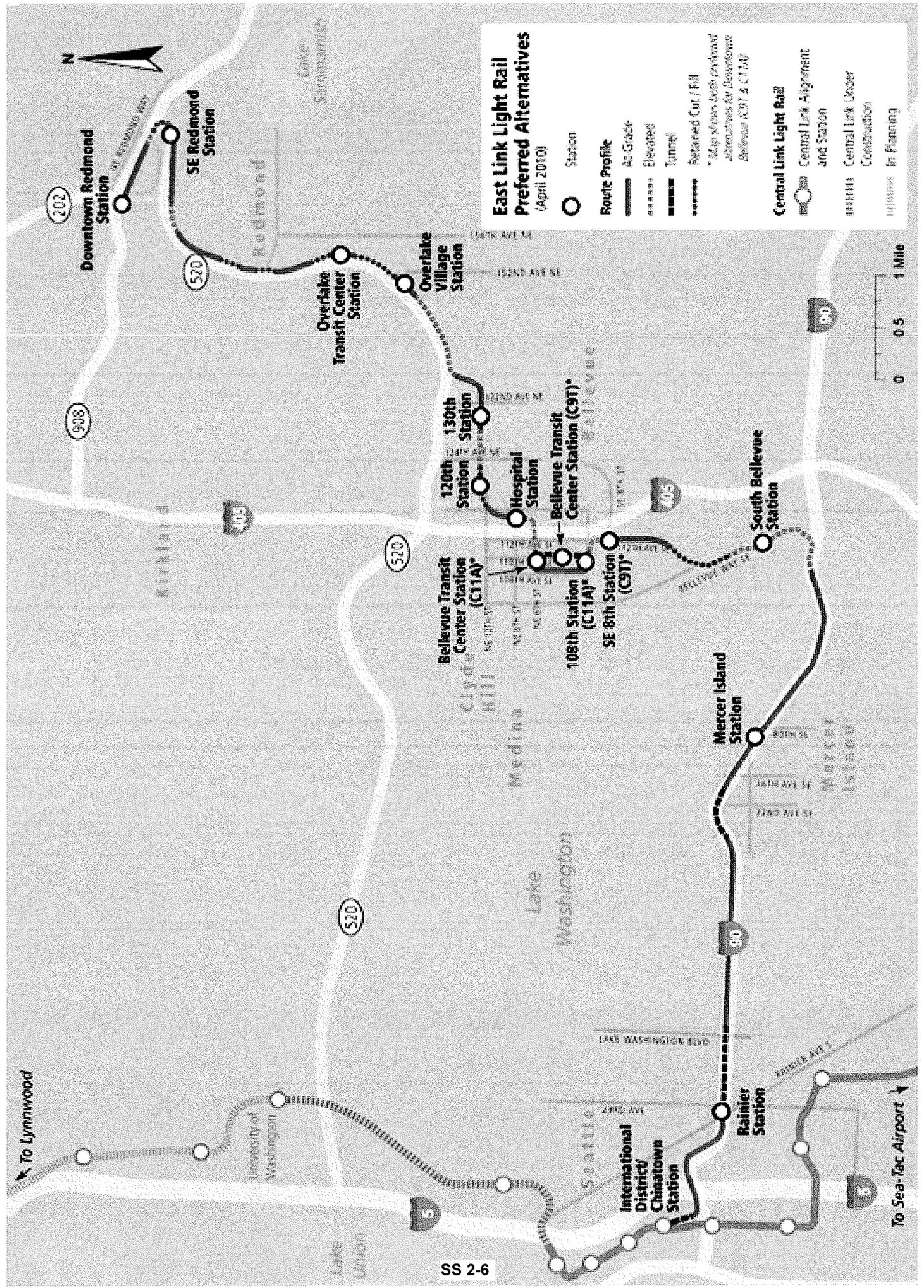
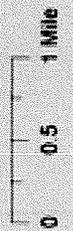
City of Bellevue
 Planning and Community Services Department
 Map date: 3/16/10

The information on this map is a geographic representation derived from the City of Bellevue Geographic Information System. The City of Bellevue does not guarantee that the information on this map is accurate or complete. This map is provided on an "as is" basis and disclaims all warranties, express or implied, including but not limited to warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose and non-infringement. Any commercial use or sale of this map or portions thereof, is prohibited without express written authorization by the City of Bellevue. The City of Bellevue is not responsible for any damages arising from the use of information on this map. Use of this map is at user's risk. Users should verify the information before making project commitments.

East Link Light Rail Preferred Alternatives (April 2010)

- Station**
○
- Route Profile**
 — At Grade
 - - - - - Elevated
 = = = = = Tunnel
 - - - - - Retained Cut / Fill
- * Major stations have preferred alternatives for Downtown Bellevue (C97) & C11A

- Central Link Light Rail**
 — Central Link Alignment and Station
 - - - - - Central Link Under Construction
 - - - - - In Planning



East Link Schedule

June 29	B2M public workshop #2: community briefing and discussion
July 6	Bellevue City Council: briefing and discussion* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B2M/112th options • Hospital Station options
July 7	B2M workshop #3: community preferences
July 14	South Bellevue Open House
July 15	Sound Transit Capital Committee: B2M and Hospital Station recommendation
July 19	Bellevue City Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B2M and Hospital Station – opportunity to recommend preferences • Results of Segment B studies (independent consultant assessments)
July 22	Sound Transit Board of Directors: B2M and Hospital Station preference
Fall 2010	Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), followed by 45 day comment period
Spring/Summer 2011	Final EIS Preliminary Engineering (30% design) Final selection of project to be built (by Sound Transit Board of Directors) Record of Decision by Federal Transit Administration
2011-13	Final design
2013-14	Construction begins
2020-21	Service begins

* City and Sound Transit staff are conducting multiple briefings with Hospital Station and B2M interests during June and July