



DATE: January 6, 2011

TO: Transportation Commission

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SUBJECT: Sound Transit East Link Project Update

Purpose

This is an informational update to the Commission on the status of the East Link Project. Staff last briefed the Commission on the East Link Project in January 2010 and provided an update memo in the November 2010 meeting packet. Staff will brief the Commission on the developments of the preliminary engineering process, the status of the environmental review, and provide an updated timeline for the East Link Project. No action is requested.

Background

Sound Transit has worked 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. The agency 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.

On April 22, the Sound Transit Board revised their preliminary preferred alternative for the East Link Project to include a downtown tunnel, C9T 110th Tunnel, and an at-grade option, C11A 108th At-Grade. As a part of identifying a tunnel option as a preferred alternative, the City and Sound Transit entered into a term sheet agreeing to negotiate in good faith to identify funding solutions to close the tunnel affordability gap. Potential City contributions include City-owned properties, relocation of City-owned utilities, third party assistance such as design review and construction inspection, and/or cash contributions.

The revised preliminary preferred alternative also included the B2M option in South Bellevue, traveling along Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue Southeast from I-90 to downtown Bellevue. Subsequently, Sound Transit led the evaluation of six alternatives for the specific routing of light rail on 112th Avenue SE. On July 22, the Sound Transit

Board identified a west-side running alignment based on technical analysis and feedback from affected stakeholders. The current Sound Transit Board Preferred Alternative map is attached for reference (Attachment 1). At the conclusion of Sound Transit's 112th Ave SE design effort the City Council voiced its opposition to the B2M alignment and declared that their south Bellevue preference would be a revised B7 alignment (Attachment 2).

Sound Transit released the East Link Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) to the public on November 12th, 2010. The 60-day comment period will end on January 10th, 2011. The SDEIS is available online at: <http://www.soundtransit.org/x3245.xml>. The SDEIS reflects the new 112th Avenue SE and downtown alignments as well as a retained cut alignment and station in the Bel-Red area. The SDEIS also includes updated conceptual designs for the B7 alignment that reflect the widening of I-405, recent development along 118th Avenue SE, and updated noise analysis. City staff reviewed the SDEIS and have prepared technical comments. Staff presented a summary of major findings to Council at the December 13th Council meeting and draft technical letter on January 3rd. The City Council also discussed a draft letter to Sound Transit outlining Council concerns, which is expected to be finalized at the Council Study session on January 10th.

Concurrent with the environmental review process, Sound Transit has been advancing preliminary engineering (PE) on the preferred alternative in an effort to deliver the project by 2020-21, as described to voters in the ST2 ballot measure. Because the alignment will not be final until the Record of Decision (ROD) is published, expected in summer 2011, Sound Transit takes the risk that the preferred alternative advancing in PE may change. PE to approximately 30% design is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2011.

During the spring and summer of 2010, at the same time as the 112th Avenue SE options evaluation, the City pursued additional analysis of issues related to the B7 alignment, Council's preferred route for Segment B of the East Link Project. Areas of analysis included review of environmental analysis and constructability issues, assessment of Mercer Slough wetland functions and values, and alternative South Bellevue Station locations. The findings of this analysis were presented to Council on July 19. Full reports are available on the City's Light Rail webpage at: <http://www.bellevuewa.gov/light-rail-documents.htm>.

This past fall, Council discussed the need for additional analysis of the East Link B7 alignment and design variations to improve performance, reduce impacts, and reduce costs. Council directed staff to prepare a scope of work to allow an "apples-to-apples" comparison of the B7 alignment with modifications, "B7-Revised" (Attachment 3) to the Sound Transit preferred B2M alignment. Staff developed a phased approach to the work, and Council directed staff to proceed with the first phase, including developing the B7-Revised alignment to approximately 5% conceptual engineering and preparing an environmental screening analysis. ARUP North America Ltd. was selected to be the

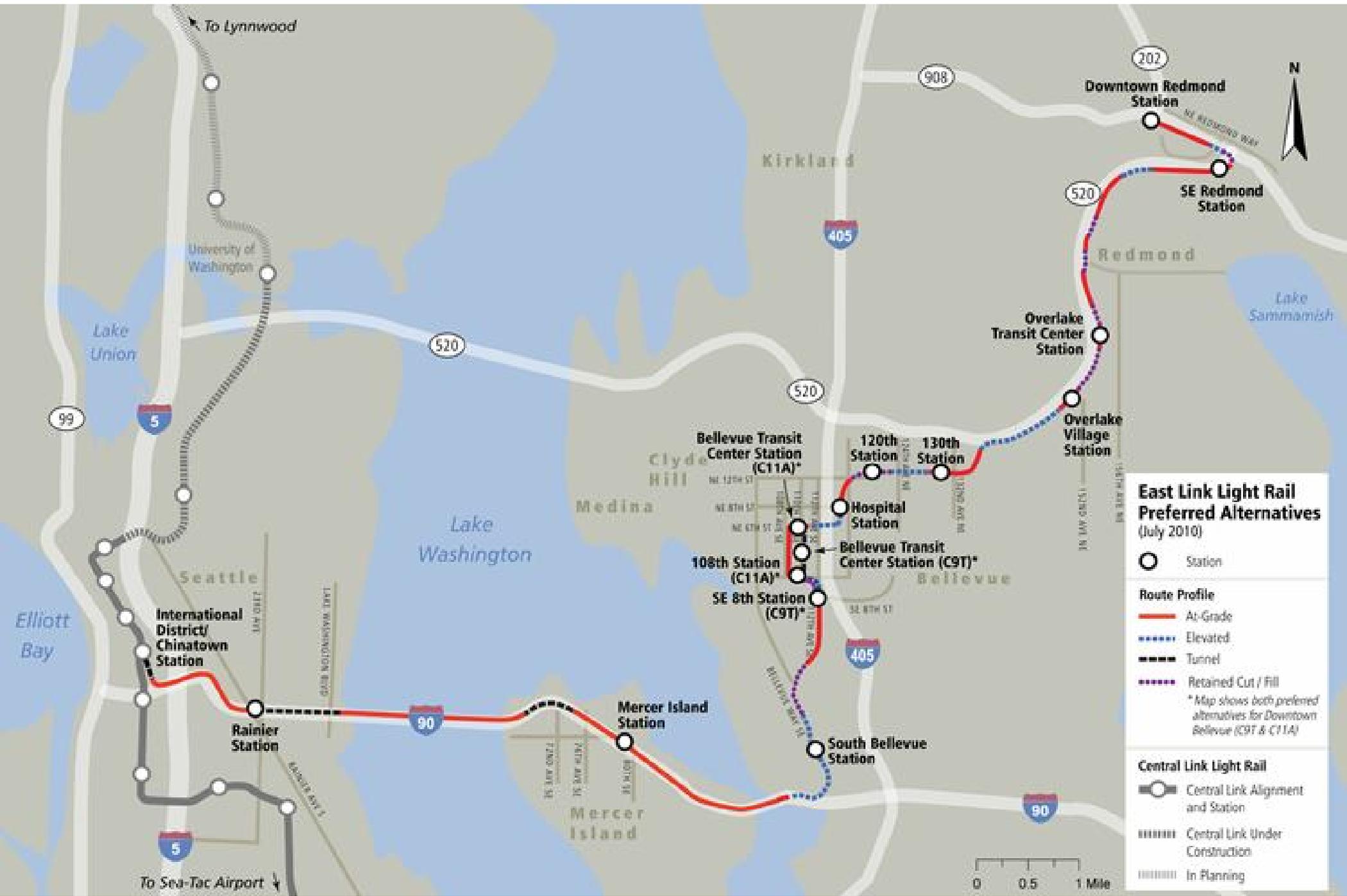
City's engineering consultant and the work is underway. An open house is scheduled in late January and a progress report to Council is anticipated in February.

Next Steps

The Final EIS is anticipated to be published in late spring 2011. All alignments will be included in the Final EIS, including responses to comments received during the fall 2009 DEIS and 2010 SDEIS public comment periods. The final alignment will be identified in the Record of Decision (ROD) published by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), expected in summer 2011.

City staff will continue to work with Sound Transit to address issues of concern as the environmental process and preliminary engineering move forward. Areas of focus in the coming year include developing agreements with Sound Transit about tunnel funding and mitigation; engineering review; station area planning; policy and code revisions; and continued Council support and community engagement.

A B7-Revised project kick-off open house is scheduled on Tuesday, January 25th from 4pm – 7pm at City Hall. The purpose of the open house is to share the B7-revised base alignment, analysis process and timeline and to provide information about opportunities for public input in the process.



To Lynnwood

University of Washington

Lake Union

99

5

520

Kirkland

405

908

Downtown Redmond Station

202

SE Redmond Station

Redmond

Overlake Transit Center Station

520

Overlake Village Station

Lake Sammamish



Bellevue Transit Center Station (C11A)*

120th Station

130th Station

Hospital Station

108th Station (C11A)*

Bellevue Transit Center Station (C9T)*

SE 8th Station (C9T)*

SE 8th St

405

South Bellevue Station

90

Lake Washington

Medina

Clyde Hill

Seattle

International District/Chinatown Station

Rainier Station

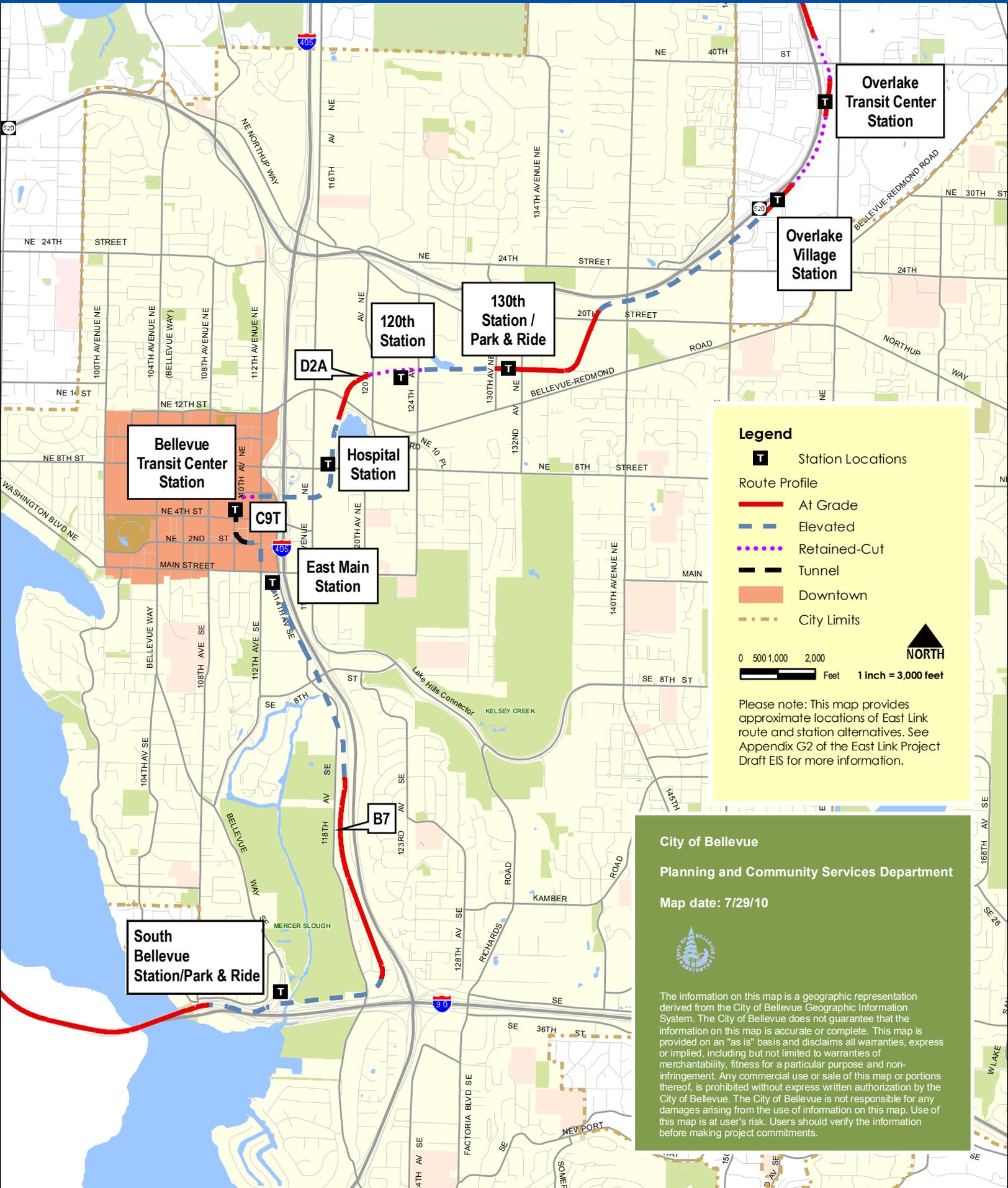
Mercer Island Station

Mercer Island

To Sea-Tac Airport

0 0.5 1 Mile

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



Legend

T 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: 7/29/10



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.

