

**APPENDIX A: URBAN CORE SUBAREA PLAN ELEMENT
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY**

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SOUND TRANSIT 3 (ST3)

In 2016, voters approved a package of regional improvements known as Sound Transit 3 (ST3). The representative project for ST3 proposed extending light rail service from Lynnwood City Center to downtown Everett. In spring 2021, Sound Transit initiated the planning stage for ST3. From 2021 to 2026, Sound Transit is undertaking planning including alternatives development, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Throughout this process, Sound Transit has been conducting public engagement. Sound Transit regularly meets to discuss plans with Snohomish County, the cities of Everett and Lynnwood, and Community Transit.

SNOHOMISH COUNTY STATION AREA PLANNING

In 2018-2019, Snohomish County initiated station area planning work to identify locally favored light rail station options. This initial planning work included seeking community input and establishing relationships with cities and partner agencies. This phase also included completing a market study of future growth around light rail stations.

More specifically, the Snohomish County Department of Public Works (DPW) and Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS) initiated the Light Rail Communities project to provide the necessary planning for land use, transportation, and other county services necessary to support future light rail transit. This included identifying and evaluating potential light rail station locations, motorized and non-motorized infrastructure needs to access light rail stations, and a market study of future growth around light rail stations. The findings from the Light Rail Communities project were shared with Sound Transit, and are available publicly within the [Station Area Planning Final Report](#).

Public Participation Feedback

Throughout the station area planning process, the County engaged with the cities of Everett, Lynnwood, Mill Creek, and Mukilteo, and external agencies including Community Transit, Sound Transit, and the Washington Department of Transportation. Extensive public outreach was made to the local community including the following:

- Three online open houses, available in 10 languages, with over 7,000 total participants and over 700 comments submitted,
- Two on-site open houses at Mariner High School and Oak Heights Elementary School, and
- Fifty other meetings and presentations with key parties and the public.

The feedback from public outreach was used to inform decisions regarding locally favored station locations and setting the boundaries of the Urban Core Subarea. The boundaries of the subarea incorporate the future station areas, and a section of the SR 99 corridor.

SNOHOMISH COUNTY LIGHT RAIL COMMUNITIES

From Spring 2020 to Fall 2021, Snohomish County conducted further public outreach regarding Light Rail Communities. The purpose was to collect input from people who live, work, and travel through the Urban Core Subarea. This included feedback on current conditions, ideas for future planning, and how the community could benefit from light rail investments.

A series of online surveys and open houses were held to collect feedback from the community:

- Community Preferences Survey – March-May 2020
- Virtual Housing Workshop – Sept 2020
- Housing Affordability Workshop – Nov-Dec 2020
- Land Use and Transportation Survey – Aug- Sept 2021

Public Participation Feedback

Community Preferences Survey – March-May 2020

The [Community Preferences Survey](#) was available from March to May 2020. A total of 1,657 respondents submitted responses. The survey consisted of 24 multiple choice and open ended questions on topics such as demography, area of residence, how people interact with the subarea, and priorities on transportation, land use, and neighborhoods. Questions asked respondents what the County’s priorities should be for parks and recreation, public lands, community facilities. Finally, there were also questions that asked respondents to select the types of housing that should be utilized most for accommodating growth. Respondents were residents within the subarea, or in Snohomish County outside of the subarea boundaries, and many of the respondents travel through, shop in, and recreate in the subarea. The type of housing supported by most respondents include 3-6 story buildings, townhouses, and 3 story walk-ups. The most important priorities for neighborhood characteristic included walkability, safe streets, and tree coverage.

The final open ended question asked respondents to share their thoughts on what the County should consider as it plans for the future. These responses were analyzed through Feature Manipulation Engine (FME) safe software. FME is a data integration platform for spatial data. The FME analysis notes how often certain themes are mentioned. The following themes were frequently mentioned in the open-ended responses.

Table A-1. Survey Theme Response Occurrences

Category	Response Occurrence
Walk	95
Park/Open Space	94
Tree	81
Parking	80
Traffic	79

Station	78
Car	66
Bus	63
Housing	58
Sidewalk	58
Bicycle/Cycling	52
Neighborhood	47
Building	34
Density	22
Safety	20
Tax	19
Pedestrian	18
Retail	18
Nature/Natural	16
Airport	12
Cost	12
Infrastructure	12
Environment	10
Crime	9

Virtual Housing Workshop – Sept 2020

The [Virtual Housing Workshop](#) was available in September 2020. A total of 55 respondents submitted responses. The virtual workshop provided background information on different housing forms. The associated survey consisted of 4 multiple choice and 1 open ended question. The last question was an interactive map that allowed respondents to leave comments tied to specific location coordinates within the Urban Core Subarea. Many of the comments regarded land use, building heights, transportation, and off-site parking. Respondents were concentrated in Snohomish County, but also resided and worked throughout the Puget Sound Region.

Housing Affordability Workshop – Nov-Dec 2020

The [Housing Affordability Workshop](#) was available from November to December 2020. A total of 23 respondents submitted responses. Due to COVID-19 gathering restrictions, a virtual workshop was held. The purpose of the workshop was to gather location-based input from the community about residential housing types and locations. The associated survey included 6 multiple choice and open ended questions. Questions focused on demographics, expected use of light rail, and input on housing and development in the subarea. Respondents expected to use light rail service frequently (several times a month), occasionally (several times a year), or regularly (several times a week).

The last question was an interactive map that allowed participants to select which areas within the subarea are best suited for different housing types. The exercise asked participants to think about how the subarea and areas around the proposed light rail stations may change. The focus was on where future density as measured by housing type should be located within the subarea. Respondents could also leave comments on the map.

Land Use and Transportation Survey – Aug-Sept 2021

The [Land Use and Transportation Survey](#) was available from August to September 2021. A total of 801 respondents submitted responses. The survey consisted of 49 multiple choice and open response questions. The purpose of the online survey was to gather input from residents about possible future changes to development regulations related to land use and transportation in the subarea. The survey included visuals showing concept building and site designs, and cross sections of streetscape designs. Topics were considered through a lens of equity and opportunity for all residents.

The survey comprised several topic areas in the Urban Core Subarea including:

- Land use- such as zoning that dictates allowed uses
- Transportation- including light rail, as well as bus routes, roads, sidewalks, and bike paths
- Housing- including housing types such as single-family, duplex, townhouses, and apartments
- Parks and Recreation
- Public services and utilities- such as fire and police, as well as sewer and broadband
- Economic Development- including regulations that govern all aspects of development including housing, transportation, and land use

Respondent preferred site designs where a building faces the street and parking is located within the building, either above or below the elevation of the street. Respondents also strongly supported maintaining and planting trees in publicly accessible sites, surface parking lots, and in commercial areas. For transportation cross-sections, respondents 162referred wide sidewalks on roadways, separated bike lanes, and street tree plantings.

URBAN CORE SUBAREA ELEMENT

Based on the planning work and public engagement from 2018 through 2021, Snohomish County decided to include a new element into the 2024 Comprehensive Plan focused on planning for the coming light rail. The Urban Core Subarea Plan Element builds upon the previous outreach work completed by Snohomish County and complies with the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) [36.70A.140](#) that requires early and continuous public participation for the Comprehensive Plan. Public participation and feedback for the Urban Core Subarea Plan Element has continued between 2021 and the present through multiple methods.

- Information regarding a Sound Transit open house session and the draft Urban Core Subarea Plan policies were posted on the County's [Light Rail Communities webpage](#) in February and March 2023.
- County employees staffed a table at Sound Transit's Everett Link Extension Scoping meeting held at Cascade High School on February 15, 2023. The County provided information to attendees regarding the Urban Core Subarea Plan and answered public questions about the subarea as well as the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update. Over 1,600 members of the public attended the meeting, making it Sound Transit's best attended open house event.
- Draft Urban Core Subarea Plan Element policies were posted on [the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update webpage](#) for 31-day public comment from March 1-31, 2023.
- A notification email regarding the comment period for the Urban Core Subarea policies was sent to the following:
 - The 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update contacts list.
 - Property owners and developers who have previously expressed interest in the subarea planning process.
 - Contacts in adjacent cities, service providers, and utility providers that operate within the subarea.
- Virtual meetings on the draft Urban Core Subarea policies were held for interested parties:
 - March 9, 2023, for adjacent municipalities, service providers, and utility providers. The meeting was attended by representatives from Sound Transit, Community Transit, and the cities of Everett, Lynnwood, Mill Creek, and Mukilteo.
 - March 23, 2023, with representatives for a property owner along 164th St SW.
 - March 24, 2023, for the Housing Authority of Snohomish County (HASCO).

Public Feedback on Urban Core Subarea Element Draft Policies

The following is a summary of the comments received, and how they have been addressed in the Urban Core Subarea Element. Comments were submitted through the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update Webpage and through emails to County employees.

- A total of 21 comments were submitted regarding the draft Urban Core Subarea policies. These were from city governments, local agencies, property owners, and other members of the public.
 - The cities of Lynnwood and Mill Creek submitted comments regarding Interjurisdictional Coordination, Land Use, Transportation, and Capital Facilities.
 - As a result of public comments, Policies UC 3.11 and UC 3.12 were added to the Interjurisdictional Coordination subsection regarding interlocal agreements and annexations.

- Comments were submitted on policy UC 5.7 regarding off-street parking reductions for developments near high-capacity transit systems. New wording was added that off-street parking reductions should meeting community and market demands.
- There were concerns about displacement risk for existing residences, businesses, and institutions caused by redevelopment. Policy UC 5.5 supports the preservation and establishment of affordable and flexible spaces for small businesses and start-ups. Policy UC 5.6 was added regarding strategies to mitigate the risk of displacement for community and cultural facilities. Policies UC 6.7 and UC 6.8 support mitigation and relocation strategies for households that are at risk of displacement.
- Service Providers submitted comments on the Capital Facilities and Utilities subelement. This included the County engaging and coordinating with service providers to identify opportunities for the co-location of public facilities. Policy 9.7 supports the coordination with wastewater service providers to identify unsewered urban enclaves.

Planning Commission Review

On June 27, 2023, a briefing was held at Planning Commission for the Urban Core Subarea Element. On September 26, 2023, a Comprehensive Plan Update Wrap-Up Briefing will be held at Planning Commission. All the revised Comprehensive Plan elements will be presented to the Planning Commission. Hearings for the Comprehensive Plan Update are scheduled for October 24-26, 2023. Deliberations for the Comprehensive Plan Update are scheduled for November 14-16, 2023. The public will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the Urban Core Subarea Element at the Planning Commission Hearings.