

LIGHT RAIL STATION AREA PLANNING FRAMEWORK POLICIES FOR SHORELINE

PURPOSE

The City of Shoreline looks forward to Sound Transit delivering light rail service including stations that are part of an integrated transit system that serves our community and region. Light rail is a key mobility strategy that is highlighted in the City's adopted Vision 2029, the Environmental Sustainability Strategy, and the Transportation Master Plan. The following policies will guide the City's future discussions and decisions regarding the planning and development of the areas surrounding light rail stations. The City will begin station area planning following Sound Transit's environmental review process for the North Corridor Transit Project, expected in 2013-2014. Zoning updates needed to implement the station area plans will be complete by 2016.

DEFINITIONS

STATION AREA: Defined as the ½ mile walk-shed from a light rail station. This area will always be evaluated for multi-family residential housing choices that support light rail transit service (R-18 and greater), non-residential uses, non-motorized transportation improvements and traffic and parking mitigation. Areas within a ¼ mile walk-shed of a station will be evaluated for multi-family residential housing choices that support light rail transit service (R-48 or greater). Planning for station areas includes evaluating land uses, transportation and parking issues associated with the development of a light rail station. Station area planning incorporates both the station area and the study area.

STUDY AREA: A larger area surrounding the station area. The boundaries can vary depending upon the existing development and transportation facilities, as well as natural boundaries, such as topography or critical areas. The analysis and evaluation of the study area will include existing and proposed major land uses, large attractors and/or generators of potential riders, land use transitions between high and low intensity land uses, the linkages to the transportation network, and developing transportation solutions.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD): Refers to site specific development located above or adjacent to a transit facility that include such services as buses, light rail or transit user parking. A TOD can be located in a Station Area or Study Area. With the presence of reliable, frequent transit in the vicinity, TODs are designed to minimize the need for residents to own an automobile. A TOD will be described using quantifiable elements, such as number of residential units, square footage of commercial and/or office space, areas of public open space, number of parking spaces, square footage of public amenities and non-motorized (i.e. bicycle and pedestrian) transportation amenities.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement will be an important factor in planning for station areas. Through public outreach and participation, the City will be able to present information and ideas to the community, as well as receive feedback from those interested in the future development of the areas around light rail stations.

Policy Station Area (SA) 1: Implement a robust community involvement process that develops tools and plans to create vibrant, livable and sustainable light rail station areas.

Policy SA2: Create and apply innovative methods to address land use transitions in order to ensure impacts on residents and businesses are managed and individual property rights are protected. Develop mechanisms to provide timely information so residents can plan for and respond to changes.

Policy SA3: Encourage and solicit the input of all stakeholders associated with station area planning to ensure that a variety of issues are evaluated in the planning process. Participants may include residents, non-motorized transportation advocates, transit agencies, affordable housing experts, environmental preservation organizations and public health agencies.

LAND USES AND REDEVELOPMENT

Almost all of the land adjacent to the planned light rail corridor through Shoreline is zoned as single-family residential. Therefore the transition to Equitable Transit Communities will represent a significant change to the land uses and character of the areas around stations over time. Plans should be made for how that transition can be accomplished in a manner that provides stability for property owners during the interim.

Policy SA4: Identify long-range development tools and mechanisms to assist people that live in areas adjacent to light rail stations during transitions from their present use to a planned use.

Policy SA5: Create a strategy in partnership with the adjoining neighborhood for phasing redevelopment of current land uses to Equitable Transit communities taking into account when the City's development needs and market demands are ready for change.

Policy SA6: Allow and encourage uses in station areas that will foster the creation of communities that are socially, environmentally and economically sustainable and are supported by planned minimum and maximum residential densities.

Policy SA7: Develop land use regulations for station areas at NE145th and NE185th streets that: include transit supportive densities; encourage existing businesses; enhance property values; encourage the creation of jobs; are built sustainably; encourage affordable housing stock; and attract investment.

Policy SA8: Design station areas in Shoreline, with large residential components mixed with complimentary commercial and office uses. Pursue market studies to determine the feasibility of developing any of Shoreline's station areas as destinations (example: regional job, shopping or entertainment centers).

Policy SA9: Identify the market and potential for redevelopment of public properties located in station and study areas.

Policy SA10: Design station areas to serve the greatest number of riders traveling to and from Shoreline through a combination of appropriate residential densities, a mix of land uses and multi-modal transportation facilities.

Policy SA11: Develop station areas as inclusive neighborhoods in Shoreline with connections to:

- Commercial nodes (North City, 15th Avenue NE, Town Center, Aurora Corridor)
- Existing neighborhoods
- Planned areas for growth and transit-oriented development, such as the N 192nd Street Park and Ride
- Bus rapid transit and local transit corridors.

Policy SA12: Encourage the location of uses within station areas in a manner that limits noise and visual impacts to the most sensitive receptors, such as residential development.

Policy SA13: Design study areas to provide a gradual transition from high density multi-family residential development to single family residential development utilizing parks and other public facilities as buffers and community amenities.

Policy SA 14: Through redevelopment opportunities in station areas, promote restoration of adjacent streams, creeks, and other environmentally sensitive areas, improve public access to these areas, and provide public education about the functions and values of the adjacent natural areas.

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Light rail will generate traffic as motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and buses travel to and from the stations. Increased traffic and on-street parking in the surrounding neighborhoods are often concerns associated with the development of stations. Appropriate transportation facilities for all modes need to be in place when light rail service to Shoreline begins to lessen traffic and parking impacts.

Policy SA15: Ensure that transportation facilities in station areas are designed and constructed to maximize safety for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers.

Policy SA16: Identify and implement measures to accommodate the anticipated increase in the number of people accessing light rail stations via motorized and non-motorized transportation options within station and study areas with the objective of creating livable communities.

Policy SA17: Work with Metro Transit, Sound Transit and Community Transit to develop a transit service plan for the light rail stations. The plan should focus on connecting residents from all neighborhoods in Shoreline to the stations in a reliable, convenient and efficient manner. The service plan should integrate with the transit needs of the entire City, allowing residents to travel to, from and within Shoreline using transit.

Policy SA18: Explore and promote a reduced dependence upon automobiles by developing transportation alternatives and determining the appropriate number of parking stalls required for TODs. These alternatives may include: car sharing (i.e. Zipcar) or bike sharing; and walking and bicycle safety programs for school children.

Policy SA19: Consider a flexible approach to designing parking to serve light rail stations that can be converted to other uses as demands for parking may be reduced over time.

Policy SA20: TODs should include non-motorized corridors that are accessible to the public and provide shortcuts for bicyclists and pedestrians. These corridors should be connected with the surrounding bicycle and sidewalk networks.

Policy SA21: Explore opportunities to use undeveloped right-of-way for pedestrian and bicycle connections that shorten travel distances to light rail stations.