

BALLARD-INTERBAY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Interagency Team Meeting #3

May 21, 2020, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Meeting Attendees

IAT Members

- Brand Koster, King County Metro
- Chris Arkills, King County Metro
- Geri Poor, Port of Seattle
- Chris Rule, Sound Transit
- Emily Yasukochi, Sound Transit
- Dan Turner, Sound Transit
- Travis Phelps, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Brian Ziegler, Washington State Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board

City of Seattle

- Diane Wiatr, Seattle Department of Transportation – *Presenter*
- Chisaki Muraki-Valdovinos, Seattle Department of Transportation – *Host*
- Andres Arjona, Seattle Department of Transportation (Intern)

Consultant Team

- Jennifer Wieland, Nelson\Nygaard – *Facilitator*
- Tom Brennan, Nelson\Nygaard – *Presenter*
- Jeri Stroupe, Nelson\Nygaard – *Notetaker & Moderator*
- Kendra Breiland, Fehr & Peers – *Presenter*

Unable to attend:

- Frank Gibson, Washington State Military
- Robin Mayhew, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Jonathan Lewis, Seattle Department of Transportation
- Ellie Smith, Seattle Department of Transportation

Elected Official Guests

- Joshua Peck, Legislative Assistant, Senator Reuven Carlyle
- Katherine Sims, Legislative Assistant, Seattle City Councilmember Andrew Lewis

Meeting Summary

Welcome

Jennifer Wieland and Diane Wiatr welcomed the Interagency Team (IAT) members and guests to the meeting. Jennifer noted that the meeting was being recorded. She provided an overview of the meeting agenda, outcomes, and supportive materials and reviewed the roles of the IAT and members of the public.

Jennifer initiated a round of introductions and asked participants to share what their respective agencies are doing to adapt during COVID-19, and what they hope to learn from the meeting. The project staff, IAT members, and consultant team all introduced themselves.

IAT members shared that many of their organizations are becoming more experienced using virtual meeting platforms to stay connected (e.g., Teams, Zoom, GoToMeeting), creating new policies to support safer and slower streets initiatives, holding more agency-wide and smaller “water-cooler” communications on a regular basis, and adapting transit service to support safe social distancing for riders and operators. Geri Poor noted that the Port is seeing 1967 passenger levels at the airport and that the cruise season has been canceled.

IAT members expressed interest in learning more about the project work underway related to land use and modal network connections and integrating future light rail into the 2042 land use assumptions. Others noted a desire to learn more about other IAT member agency perspectives for the future of this study area and hope that this project helps highlight the importance of Ballard-Interbay for freight that serves the city and region.

Diane then gave a brief overview of the BIRT Study and the project area. She noted the project will culminate in a report to be delivered to the Washington State Legislature on November 1, 2020; the timeline has not been extended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Via the meeting chat feature, Brian Ziegler asked to clarify if “preseason” or “cruise season” was canceled. Geri responded that the 2020 cruise schedule is being revised due to the global response to COVID-19. Holland America, Princess Cruises, and Carnival Cruise Line have canceled 2020 sailings from Seattle. Cruise line updates are available online ([Link](#)).

Stakeholder Engagement Updates

Diane Wiatr provided a summary of the community outreach efforts SDOT has conducted for the BIRT Study to date. Chisaki Muraki-Valdovinos then elaborated on how the outreach is being restructured during the pandemic to reach employers and employees virtually and by phone since in-person events are not permitted.

Jennifer Wieland asked the IAT members if they had any feedback from stakeholders or colleagues that they wished to share.

- Emily Yasukochi said Sound Transit conducted a waterway users survey to collect vessel information in Salmon Bay. She also noted that Sound Transit cannot do pop-up events during this time so one idea the agency is exploring is reaching out to multi-family buildings to see if Sound Transit staff can join building-hosted online meetings. Jennifer asked if the results from the waterway users survey could be shared with the project team; Emily said she would discuss with others at Sound Transit.
- Dan Turner shared that Sound Transit is gearing up for public outreach to discuss station access in the study area later this year and there is some potential for coordination.
- Diane asked Brian Ziegler if there was any way he could facilitate a connection with freight drivers in the area. Brian said it is possible, depending on what is needed. Diane said she will connect with Brian separately to follow up.

Future Scenarios and Evaluation Framework

Kendra Breiland gave an overview of the study area and the traffic inputs that were adapted for use in this project (as the team was unable to conduct new counts given the pandemic). She then discussed how land use, transportation, and bridge replacement alternatives are being used to develop two future scenarios. She noted that two alternatives for both the Magnolia and Ballard Bridges are being used for the analysis, but elements of the scenarios can be mixed and matched.

Kendra also presented the approach to project evaluation and the goals that are being considered. Tom Brennan then described the approach to the social and economic impact analysis for the project. He noted that Community Attributes, a subconsultant on the project team, will be leading this work; they are currently working in the study area as part of the Mayor's Industrial and Maritime Strategy.

Jennifer Wieland invited the IAT members to ask questions or share feedback on the scenarios and evaluation framework.

- Emily Yasukochi asked the team to confirm that the light rail alignment being used is the preferred alternative used in the draft environmental impact statement. Diane Wiatr confirmed that was correct. Emily also noted that the final preferred alignment will not be confirmed by the Sound Transit Board until 2022.
- Geri Poor noted that the Port of Seattle is supportive of the in-kind bridge replacement for the Magnolia Bridge but not the Armory Way concept. Diane noted that the Mayor and City Council have not made any decisions on the Magnolia Bridge replacement, and, until a decision is made, both alternatives are being considered. She noted that the community also prefers the in-kind replacement.
- Geri said that when the Port of Seattle has reviewed economic impact studies in the past, they have had a difficult time incorporating fishing activity. She noted that

fishing vessels may provision in Seattle but fish elsewhere (e.g., Alaska). Geri stated she would like to see this examined in this study. Tom Brennan said he would connect with Community Attributes to discuss this issue further.

Planning Context and Multimodal Needs Assessment

Jennifer Wieland presented the key themes from the planning context review of current plans and projects. She then invited Kendra Breiland to present the multimodal needs assessment findings.

Kendra walked through the approach and initial improvement opportunities identified for each mode of transportation and invited feedback from the IAT. The sections below provide an overview of the key findings for each mode, including the maps shared with the IAT, and comments provided by IAT members.

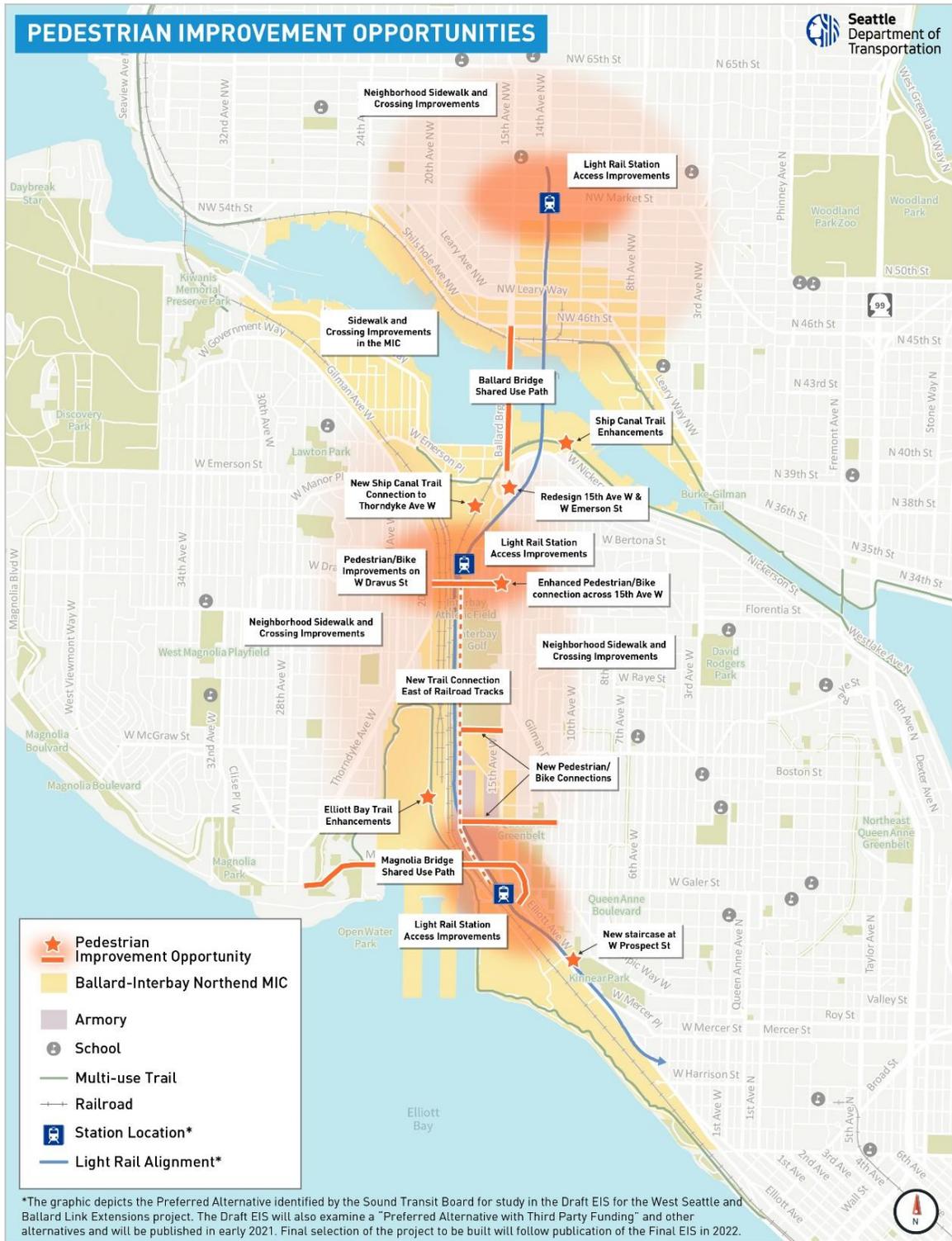
Kendra and Jennifer asked that IAT members continue to review the findings—including the more detailed Draft Multimodal Needs Assessment Memo—with their colleagues and provide any additional feedback to the team. Geri Poor asked for a deadline to provide feedback, and Jennifer suggested that all comments be sent to SDOT by mid-June.

Pedestrian Network

Kendra noted that the project team’s evaluation of facilities for people walking in the BIRT study area included considerations such as sidewalk presence and condition, crosswalk presence, distance between formal crossings along arterials, and proximity to future light rail stations. Figure 1 summarizes the team’s high-level findings of needs to accommodate walking in the study area.

- Emily Yasukochi noted that station access is important to Sound Transit.
- Brand Koster added that King County Metro feels pedestrian connectivity is important to their operations, including for existing and future fixed-route transit service to light rail stations.
- Geri Poor noted that when the Port has cruise ships in dock, a surprising number of people walk or take public transit once they get off the ship. Visitors to Fishermen’s Terminal also require quality pedestrian connections. She added that the Port is keen on safety and appreciates keeping pedestrians separated from freight and large trucks.

Figure 1 Pedestrian Network Opportunities

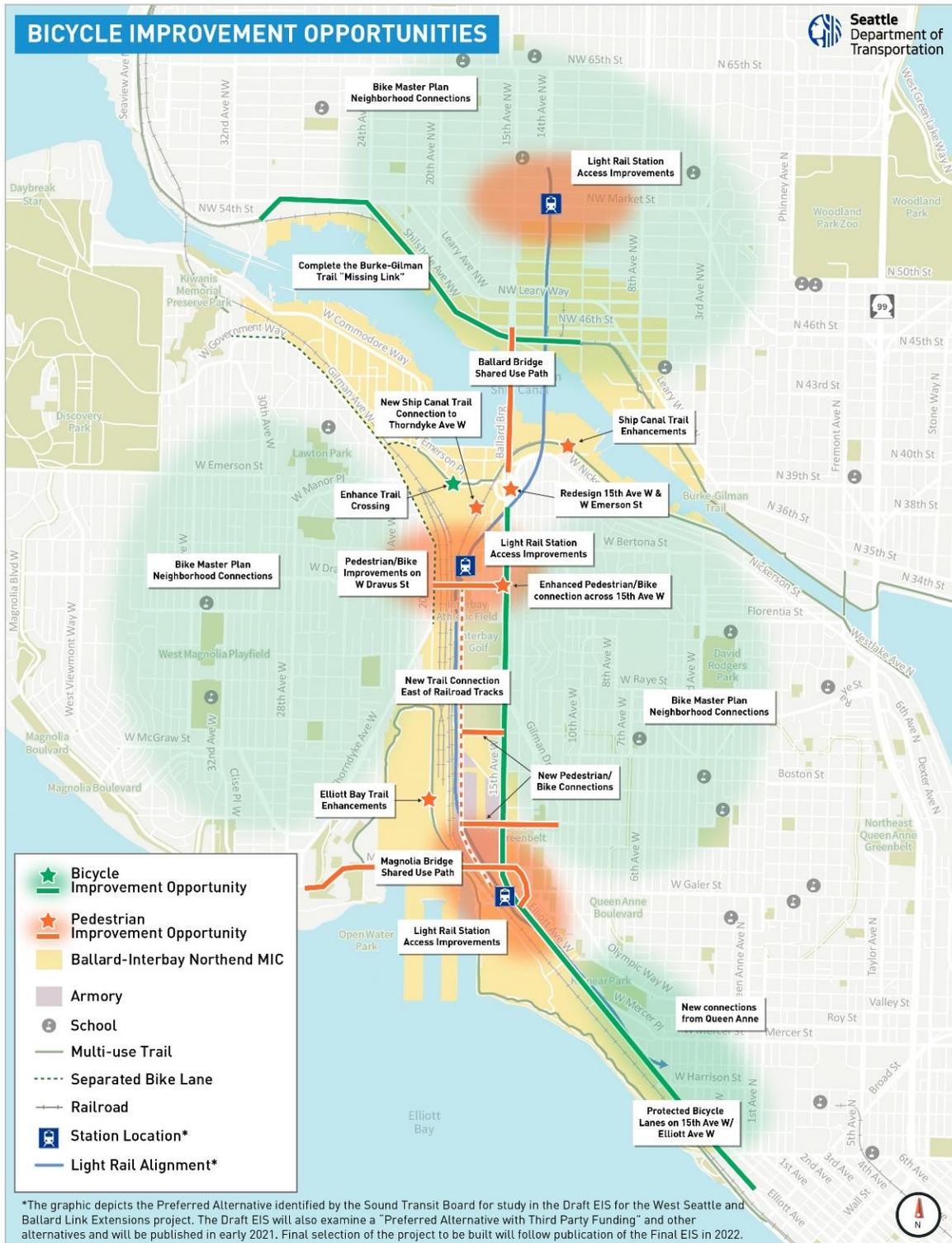


Bicycle Network

The project team evaluated the transportation network for people bicycling in the BIRT study area. This included considerations such as bicycle facility presence and type, level of comfort for people of all ages and abilities, distance to the nearest crosswalk along arterials, and proximity to future light rail stations. Figure 2 summarizes high-level findings of needs to accommodate biking in the study area. (Note: Some pedestrian investments are shown, as they are shared needs by pedestrians and cyclists.)

- Chris Arkills noted the Ballard Bridge is an important bicycle corridor but is also challenging to ride today. He stated that he wanted to flag as a concern how a high-level bridge replacement would accommodate bicycles.
- Dan Turner inquired about whether there are any opportunities for separate bicycle and pedestrian facilities parallel to the Magnolia Bridge. Kendra responded that the project team is examining the possibilities.

Figure 2 Bicycle Network Opportunities

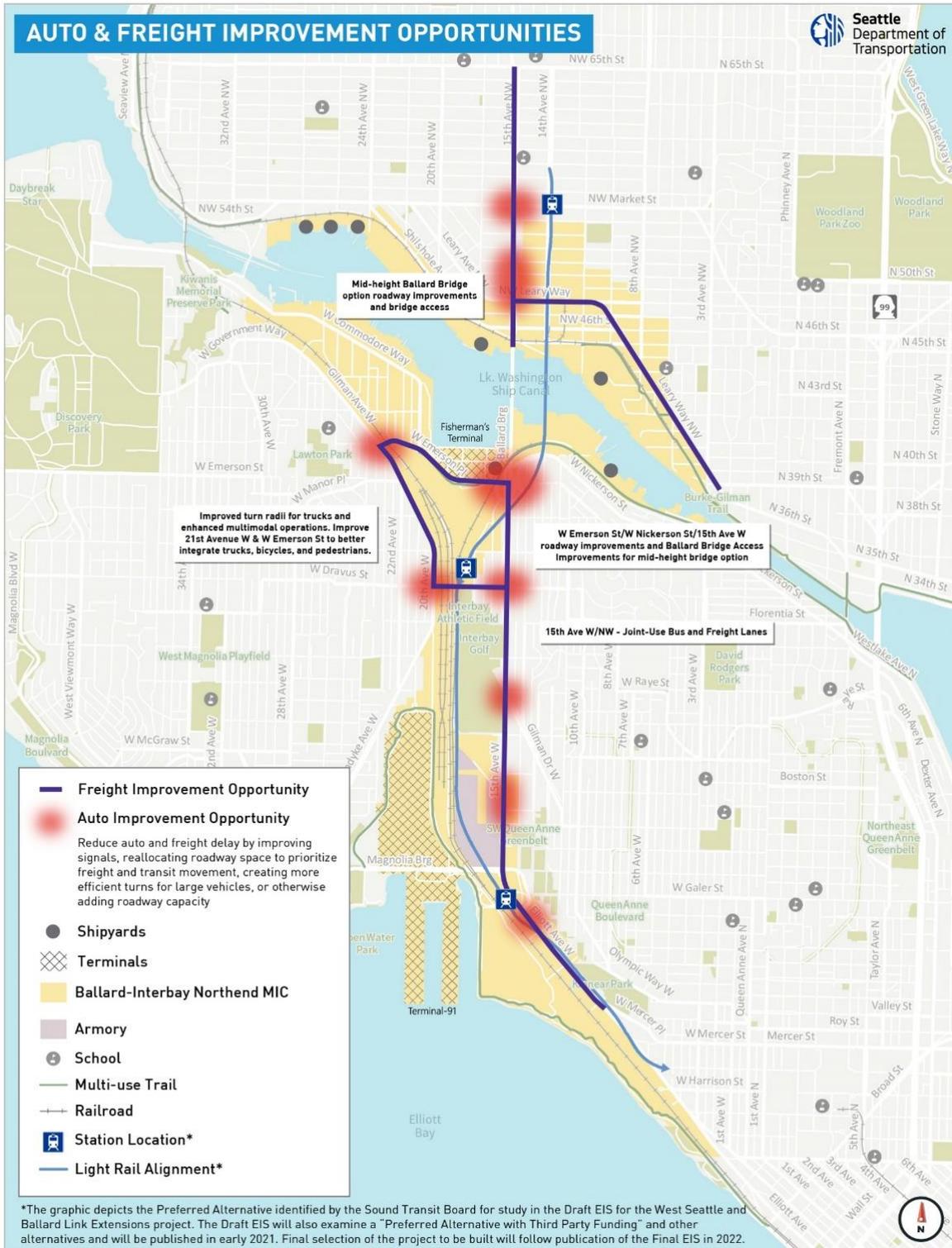


Auto and Freight Network

Kendra noted that the study area is also very important for people traveling by private vehicles and moving freight. The team evaluated existing and projected future traffic volumes, intersection operations, and freight travel times. Figure 3 summarizes high-level findings of needs to accommodate auto trips and goods movement in the study area.

- Geri Poor noted that freight movement is and always will be a priority for the Port.

Figure 3 Auto and Freight Network Opportunities

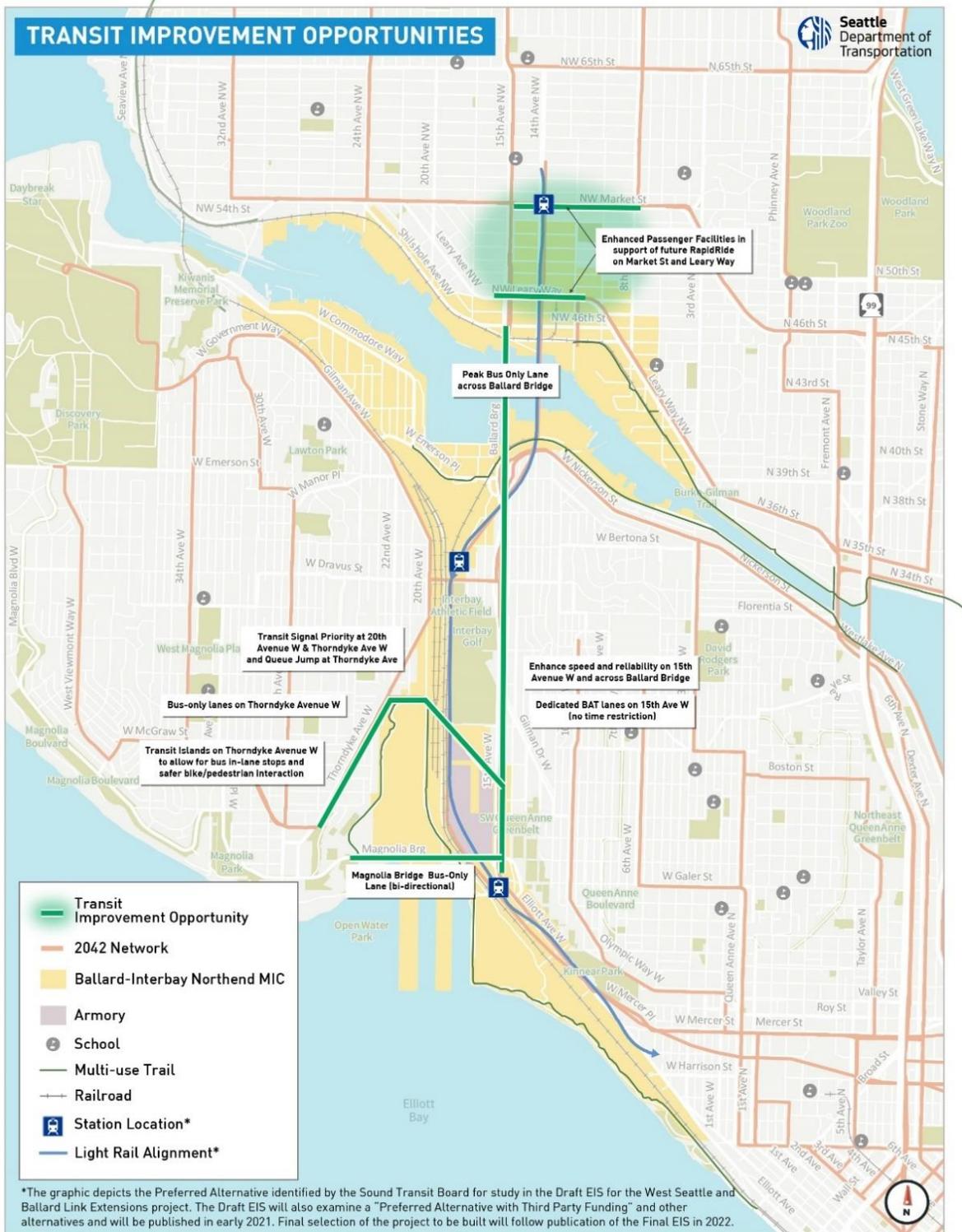


Transit Network

The project team evaluated the network for people using transit in the BIRT study area. This analysis considered existing service, which is generally provided by King County Metro, as well as future services that will be available with the construction of the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions and new and revised bus services assumed in the METRO CONNECTS 2040 bus network. Figure 4 summarizes high-level findings of needs to accommodate transit travel in the study area.

- Brand Koster stated that speed and reliability is important to King County Metro and that bicycle and pedestrian access to stops and stations is critical to making bus service work well.
- Emily Yasukochi wanted to note that, with the pandemic, there is uncertainty about the finances of Sound Transit, as is the case with most transit agencies throughout the country. She asked the team to bear that in mind in terms of future projects as the BIRT Study moves forward.

Figure 4 Transit Network Opportunities



Public Comment

Jennifer Wieland opened the meeting for public comment, reviewing the protocols for participation. She noted comments would be limited to two minutes per person.

- **Laura Loe** – Stated she rents an apartment south of the Ballard Bridge and is passionate about affordable housing. She noted she is a former bus driver and believes in the preservation of maritime and industrial jobs. She is concerned about the silos and the timing of planning decisions being made with so many different projects going on. She also noted that she has issues getting on the D Line going southbound and that she would love some disability-friendly improvements.
- **Linda** – Stated she was curious how the Magnolia Bridge fits into all of this (she noted she missed the first part of the meeting). She noted there is lots of planning and meetings but no funding allocated. Diane Wiatr responded, explaining that while this study does not fund design for or replacement of the Magnolia or Ballard bridges, it will provide a timeline and recommendation for how to do so. That recommendation will then go to the Washington State Legislature. Diane noted if the Magnolia or Ballard bridges are reconstructed, it will likely be with a combination of state, federal, and local dollars.
- **Janice Traven** – Commended the BIRT team for taking a holistic systems view and noted that in the past, work was siloed. She asked if there is there any consideration for wrapping the bridges together into one megaproject. She also noted lots of people in Magnolia people could not sign on to attend this meeting.
- **Ray Dubicki** – Stated he is a resident of Ballard and that he is a regular attendee of all the Sound Transit, Armory, and BIRT meetings. He stated there were two parts of the presentation that concerned him. The first was the focus on trucks and freight which results in oversized roads and bridges. Instead, he urged that consideration be given to reduce truck traffic and instead rely more on rail. His second concern was that none of the diagrams consider the Ballard Locks as a pedestrian connection. He also noted the figures don't show the interchanges to get on and off the bridges. He stated he would love to see these conversations begin with Vision Zero goals.
- **Ben Broesamle** – Stated that he also missed part of the presentation. He was hoping for consideration of how to improve the Dravus Street bridge over the railroad tracks. He noted it will be an increasingly important connection with the light rail expansion, and the bridge doesn't have good bike or pedestrian accommodations. Diane Wiatr responded that the bridge is being examined as part of this study and is being analyzed in the context of bike/ped movement and access to the proposed light rail station.
- **Sean Cryan** – Stated he is a 30-year commuter over the Ballard Bridge via bus, bike, and car. He appreciated Ray's comment about the Locks as a pedestrian connection. He noted that if the bridge were improved, pedestrian counts at the Locks would probably go down. He also noted the project planning horizon of 2042 is far in the future and urged consideration of interim improvements to the bridge for non-motorized users.

- **Daniela Eng** – Stated she is with the Magnolia Chamber of Commerce and wants the Magnolia Bridge to be examined as a one-to-one replacement, especially given emergency response times. She noted with the added bike lanes on Emerson Place, response times have gone up north of the Magnolia Bridge, and that without the Magnolia Bridge, response times would be even higher.
- **Ken** –Seconded Daniela’s comment.
- **Millie Magner** – Thanked the team for engaging the community. She also seconded the recommendation to make the Ballard Bridge more user friendly to non-motorized modes. She noted she was an advocate for lowering the speed limit to 30 MPH.

Jennifer thanked attendees for their comments and noted that people unable to attend the meeting can also provide comments by visiting: www.tinyurl.com/ballardinterbay. A recording of the meeting will be available on the BIRT project website the week of May 25.

Next Steps

Diane Wiatr thanked the community again for their participation and apologized for the technical issues. She then walked through the next steps and upcoming meetings for the project, including beginning to develop and evaluate a draft project list. She noted there will be a public meeting in June, as well as other upcoming opportunities for input.

Jennifer Wieland reviewed the timeline and topics for upcoming IAT meetings (shown in Figure 5 below) and confirmed the action items:

- Emily Yasukochi will investigate whether Sound Transit is able to share results of its waterway users survey with the BIRT project team.
- The BIRT project team will send the Multimodal Needs Assessment to the IAT by early June, with a deadline of mid-June for comments.
- The BIRT project team will circulate a final version of the Methods and Assumptions Memo with the notes for the IAT meeting.
- The BIRT project team will ensure the social and economic impact analysis will take into account fishing industries that fish elsewhere but provide products in the Ballard-Interbay area.

Jennifer Wieland thanked the IAT and members of the public for their participation and input and adjourned the meeting.

Figure 5 Future IAT Meetings and Topics

Meeting	Topics	Public Invited
Meeting #4 (July)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical Findings and Preliminary Recommendations - Draft Bridge Replacement Timelines - Draft Traffic Management Plans 	Yes
Meeting #5 (Aug/Sept)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft Plan Recommendations - Final Timeline and Traffic Management Plans - Draft Funding Strategy 	Yes
Meeting #6 (if needed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final Review of Draft Plan 	No