



The City of Bellevue

## East Main Station Area Planning Visioning Open House Summary

October 28, 2014 Bellevue City Hall



### Introduction

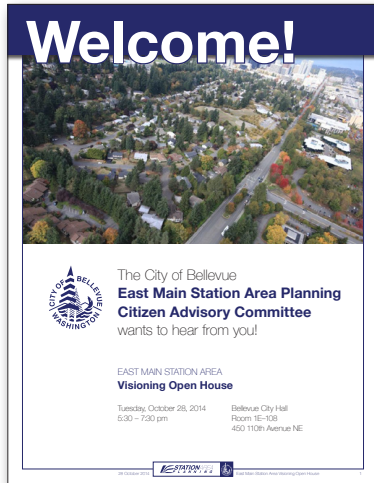
The City of Bellevue East Main Station Area Planning Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) hosted a visioning open house the evening of October 28 at Bellevue City Hall. The purpose of the open house was to initiate the station area planning process for neighborhoods in the vicinity of the future East Main light rail station. The recently formed East Main Station Area Planning CAC is working with city staff and the community to identify opportunities and concerns to be studied and addressed in the East Main station area plan. The open house provided the CAC and City staff an opportunity to hear the public's thoughts about community character, neighborhood access, pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections to the station and future zoning changes on the east side of 112th Avenue SE, among any other items that the community felt important.

Many CAC members attended the open house to talk with community members about their interests for the area. City staff and consultants facilitated interactive display stations where attendees asked questions and offered their views or concerns about the future of the area around the East Main Station including the adjacent neighborhoods of Surrey Downs, Bellecrest and Downtown. They also discussed their ideas and preferences for future redevelopment of the area east of 112th Ave SE and south of Main Street.

Approximately 35 community members attended the open house. Attendees received a handout that provided basic information about the project (Attachment 1) and a comment form. Responses from the comment forms are provided at the end of this document.



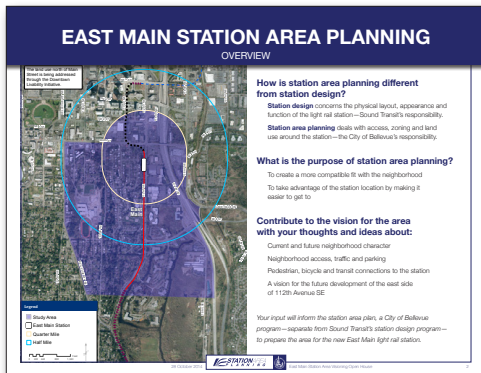
## 1. Overview Station



**Purpose** To provide participants with information about the light rail station and the station area planning process.

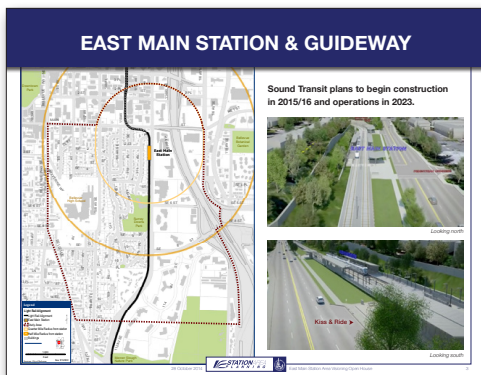
Exhibits identified the study area around the future light rail station and described the purpose of station area planning. A Sound Transit animation of the light rail train running through the Eastside alignment provided a clear view of the relationship between the future train infrastructure and the adjacent neighborhoods.

## 2. Neighborhood Character & Key Considerations



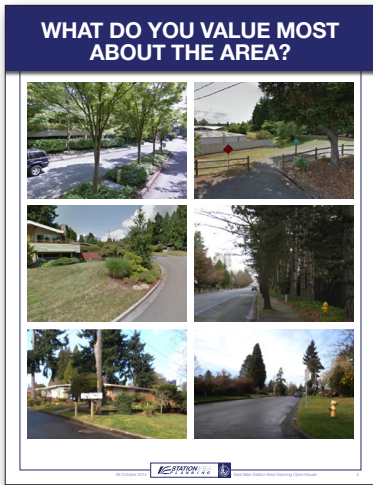
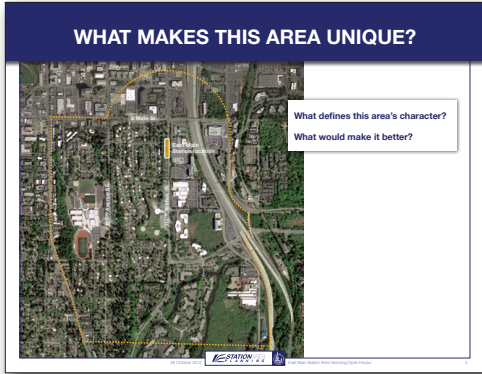
**Purpose** To seek feedback about the character of the study area—with particular focus on which aspects are valued—and to identify concerns for the future.

Exhibits included an aerial vicinity map, a base map showing the light rail station and guideway, as well as character images of the neighborhood. The questions posed were: What makes this area unique, what defines this area’s character and what would make it better? Responses were posted on sticky notes, which were often seconded by subsequent attendees. These are listed below, with those mentioned most often at the top.



### Uniqueness & Character

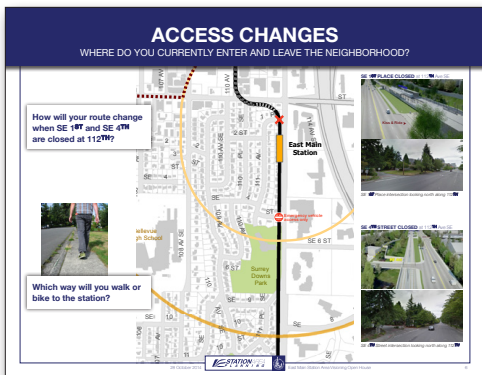
- Walkability
- Natural beauty — trees and wildlife — must be protected
- Single family housing
- Architecture of homes
- No/low through-traffic
- Quiet
- Connected neighbors
- Single family adjacent to downtown
- Lots of style
- Modest sized homes
- Access to unique shops and restaurants (Old Bellevue)
- We are a village



**Concerns & Suggestions**

- Extend the character of old Main from 100th to 112th (right now, Main & 112th is an on-ramp for I-90). Expanding on the idea, create a walkable district of unique shops and restaurants the entire length with 2 lanes of traffic and on-street parking. Concern was expressed that the city is looking to Main Street to support commuter traffic when it should support a quieter Main Street with small, neighborhood serving businesses.
- Extend on-street parking north and south from 104th to 112th leaving one lane of traffic east and west.
- Encourage mixed-use development with a retail base and walkable street level.
- Connect 110th north of Main with 110th south of Main, including a traffic light to facilitate westbound access into Surrey Downs.
- Create a good bike path along light rail or through the neighborhood.
- For traffic congestion during construction of light rail, a suggestion was made to delineate a ring around downtown Bellevue and charge people for driving into the downtown area and parking their cars. London was offered as an example.
- Move all office development east of I-405 so that residents could enjoy the retail without all the congestion.
- High-rise development along I-405 would provide a good buffer from freeway noise. Residences could be located along 112th, perhaps mixed with a retail pedestrian corridor down the middle.
- The unique character of Surrey Down homes is an asset residents want to preserve and protect – numerous homes were designed in the 1950’s by the architecture firm Mithun & Nelund. Residents view the neighborhood as an historic district.
- Distribute job growth east of I-405.

**3. Access Changes**



**Purpose** To gather feedback on current patterns of access to and from the neighborhood and hear views on how to solve access issues that will result from light rail.

Exhibits at this station included a basemap showing the East Main Station area walkshed with photos providing detail about the light rail alignment, planned street closures and station location. Meeting participants were asked: 1) Where do you currently enter and leave the neighborhood? 2) How will your route change when SE 1st and SE 4th are closed at 112th? and 3) Which way will you walk or bike to the station? Some attendees added sticky notes and annotations to the base maps but most feedback came through conversations with the staff facilitating the station.

### **Pedestrian Access**

- Several people were concerned about access to 112th Ave SE so that they could get to bus stops, the Bellevue Club, office buildings and to walk and jog along the corridor. Ideas to address this included providing a pedestrian overpass from the Surrey Downs Park area across the light rail and maybe also across 112th Ave SE itself (location suggestion is between SE 6th and SE 8th); another idea was to improve the access between Surrey Downs and the Bellefield residential neighborhood to the south.
- No feedback was offered about sidewalks, cycling or internal circulation within the neighborhood.

### **Vehicular Access**

- There were concerns that the loss of access to 112th Ave SE would bring increased traffic and noise to 108th Ave SE. Some felt the offset/staggered intersection of Main Street and 110th Ave already limits directions from which people can enter or leave the neighborhood.
- Concern about increased school traffic at Bellevue High School, especially when SE 1st and SE 4th are closed.
- Many attendees were concerned about the number of future access points to Surrey Downs. Some suggested that current turn restrictions on southbound 108th at Main and from Main onto southbound 110th may need to be re-evaluated as a result of changing neighborhood conditions.
- Need south access through Surrey Downs to get to E Main.
- Enforce the right in/right out at 108th Av SE.
- Keep 110 Av SE access point open. It is still needed.
- Access issues on Main Street: new multifamily development at 105th and Bellevue Way, 110th Ave SE jog in the road and 108th SE has no protected turn, so cars back up.
- Address vehicle access at Main St and 110th Ave SE.
- Line up 110th Ave north and south across Main St.

### **Other Ideas & Observations**

- A couple of participants mentioned that Bellevue lacked places to 'hang out', the public square, a meeting place or "third place" that was not the mall; this was less about access but more about urban design, land use and development.
- Add a signal at SE 6th St.
- Lighting throughout the neighborhood is needed.
- Retain bus stop near SE 15th St along 112th Ave SE.
- Preserve bus service on 108th Ave SE. People on the very south end of the study area (around SE 17th St) feel somewhat disconnected from the station, yet many seniors in the area rely on transit to serve their transportation needs.

## 4. Development Vision

**POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT AREA**

**Current Zoning: Office Limited Business (OLB)**

The Office and Limited Business (OLB) district provides for uses such as offices, hotels, motels, restaurants and limited retail sales located in areas with convenient access to freeways and major highways.

- Height: 30 feet along 112th Ave SE, up to 75 feet near I-405
- Residential Density: up to 30 multifamily units per acre

**Current Use**

- Hotels and supporting surface parking
- Red Lion Hotel: 2 stories on 6 acres
- Hilton Hotel: 11 stories on 6.6 acres
- Various office buildings: 2-6 stories

Changes in development standards would affect all properties in the OLB zone. Timing of redevelopment would be at the discretion of individual property owners.

**Purpose** To hear community preferences about the development vision for the potential redevelopment area.

Participants were asked to describe their preferences for the future development character of the area to the east of 112th Ave SE and south of Main Street. An aerial base map defined the area under consideration and an image board offered examples of different building types in Bellevue. Participants were given dots — two green and two red — to place on their top and least desired choices. Residents were fairly negative about any medium- to high-density development even if part of a mixed-use project that included retail. However, in contrast, a number of people felt higher buildings adjacent to I-405 would be a benefit in mitigating traffic noise from the freeway. A clear preference among the images was for street level retail. Results are shown below.

**WHAT SHOULD NEW DEVELOPMENT LOOK LIKE?**  
WHAT DO YOU PREFER — OR NOT PREFER — ABOUT THESE EXAMPLES?

- Avalon Bellevue**  
- 5-story mid-rise  
- Mixed use: apartments over retail
- Pinnacle Bellcentre**  
- 5-story mid-rise  
- Mixed use: apartments over retail
- City University**  
- 3-story low-rise  
- Mixed use: offices over parking (to merit)
- Civica**  
- 6-story high-rise mixed use  
- Mixed use: office over retail
- Carriage Place Condos**  
- Low-rise residential  
- 24 units on 1.28 acres (~15 units/acre)
- Watermark Apartments**  
- 4-story low- to mid-rise  
- Residential: 60 units over parking (to merit)
- Library Square Condos**  
- 4-story mid-rise  
- Mixed use: residential over retail
- Lexus Nexus**  
- 2-story low-rise  
- Office
- 112th @ 12th**  
- Office over small amount of retail
- Low-rise residential**
- Low-rise retail**
- First Mutual Bank**  
- 6-story mid-rise (high-rises behind)  
- Commercial: office with some retail

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28 October 2014

### Observations and Ideas

- Make Main Street be a walking street.
- Create a continuous pedestrian route around downtown so people can walk around the area.
- From Old Bellevue stretch to the east with street parking, encourage walking.
- Several suggested taller development such as offices on the east side of the redevelopment area, next to I-405 to buffer sound. Softer, more pedestrian scale next to the street with retail and residential development was recommended on 112th Ave SE.

- Like having the hotels where they are now.
- Would like to see unique retail establishments in the redevelopment area.
- Westlake Avenue in Seattle is an example of a street that has become very walkable over time.
- Provide more park space across from Surrey Downs Park.
- Keep the views for current residents.
- Problem is the lack of vehicular capacity on-street for new development.
- The Library area has been developed very well — not as much congestion as East Main area.
- Many living in Surrey Downs or Bellecrest would like to have more walking options near their homes. Many walk to Old Bellevue and Downtown, and feel pedestrian-scaled retail along 112th Ave SE, where it may end up being less dense, would be a nicer option for the neighborhood.

## Thoughts Submitted on Comment Forms

### Respondent 1

- Lives on 108th Ave SE, when the construction starts, how do we get in and out to get to 405 or I-90?
- Make sure not to increase the traffic on 108th Ave.
- Wants to see the old Main Street shops extended and pass through Bellevue Way, all the way to 112th with pathways. Shops would be only unique shops you can't find elsewhere, not the franchise shops or big store names.

### Respondent 2

- Add a street light at 114th Ave & SE 6th St and also at 114th Ave and NE 2nd.
- Eastside of 112th — when hotels torn down — street level retail and food and up to 6 floors of quality condos — not entry level but similar to library condos.
- Need to get real counts at commute times of current ingress/ egress from/to Surrey Downs to decode some traffic impact solutions to closing 1st and 4th on 112th Ave SE.

### Respondent 3

- Do not diminish walkability & uniqueness of area.
- Please consider traffic concerns down 108th Ave SE.
- Would like to extend shop and retail quality on Main Street to east of Bellevue Way.

### Respondent 4

- Redevelopment should NOT be redundant to downtown. To maintain the neighborhood feel but to allow filling in perhaps service/retail gaps, a European feeling... bistro, cafes, low-rise, plenty of trees, etc... this sort of development should be encouraged.
- Light-rail is perfect for people coming into the hotels from the airport and the introduction of a couple of cafe-like, coffee-shop options, would be perfect.
- REDUCE status-quo noise, cars, etc. Thanks for this opportunity!

**Respondent 5**

- I am unclear and/but concerned about the apparent lack of pedestrian and vehicular access between Surrey Downs and Surrey Downs Park and 112th Ave SE. It is a very long distance between Main Street & the 112th/Bellevue Way “Y”.

**Respondent 6**

- Within a 1/4 mile of East Main Station, would like to see the zoning change to be more dense because of walkability.

**Respondent 7**

- Bicycle access not just 1/4 mile from the station. We need point to point access — Seattle to Bellevue downtown, Bellevue to Redmond.
- Consider extending the 520 trail from the UW to Microsoft — AND — adding a bike lane spur along the Bellevue Braids to NE 10th St.



**Attachment 1: Meeting Handout**



# STATION AREA PLANNING

## EAST MAIN STATION

The City of Bellevue

### **East Main Station Area Planning Citizen Advisory Committee**

wants to hear from you!



The October 28 open house offers you an opportunity to contribute to the vision for the area surrounding the future East Main light rail station. Please share your thoughts and ideas about:

- Current and future neighborhood character
- Neighborhood access, traffic and parking
- Pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections to the station
- A vision for the future development of the east side of 112th Avenue SE

Your input will form the basis for this station area plan—a City of Bellevue program separate from the Sound Transit station design work—to prepare for the addition of a light rail station to the area.

**For more information, visit**

[www.bellevuewa.gov/east-main-station.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/east-main-station.htm)

# STATION AREA PLANNING

## How is station area planning different from station design?

- » **Station design** concerns the physical layout, appearance and function of the light rail station—Sound Transit’s responsibility.
- » **Station area planning** deals with access, zoning and land use around the station—the City of Bellevue’s responsibility.

## What is the purpose of station area planning?

- » to create a more compatible fit with the neighborhood
- » to take advantage of the station location by making it easier to get to

## REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

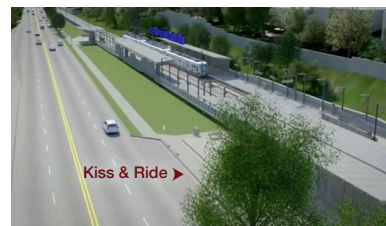


What kinds of businesses, activities and features would appeal to you in this area?

## ACCESS CHANGES



Access to Surrey Downs neighborhood from 112<sup>TH</sup> will be closed at SE 1<sup>ST</sup> Place and 4<sup>TH</sup> Street.

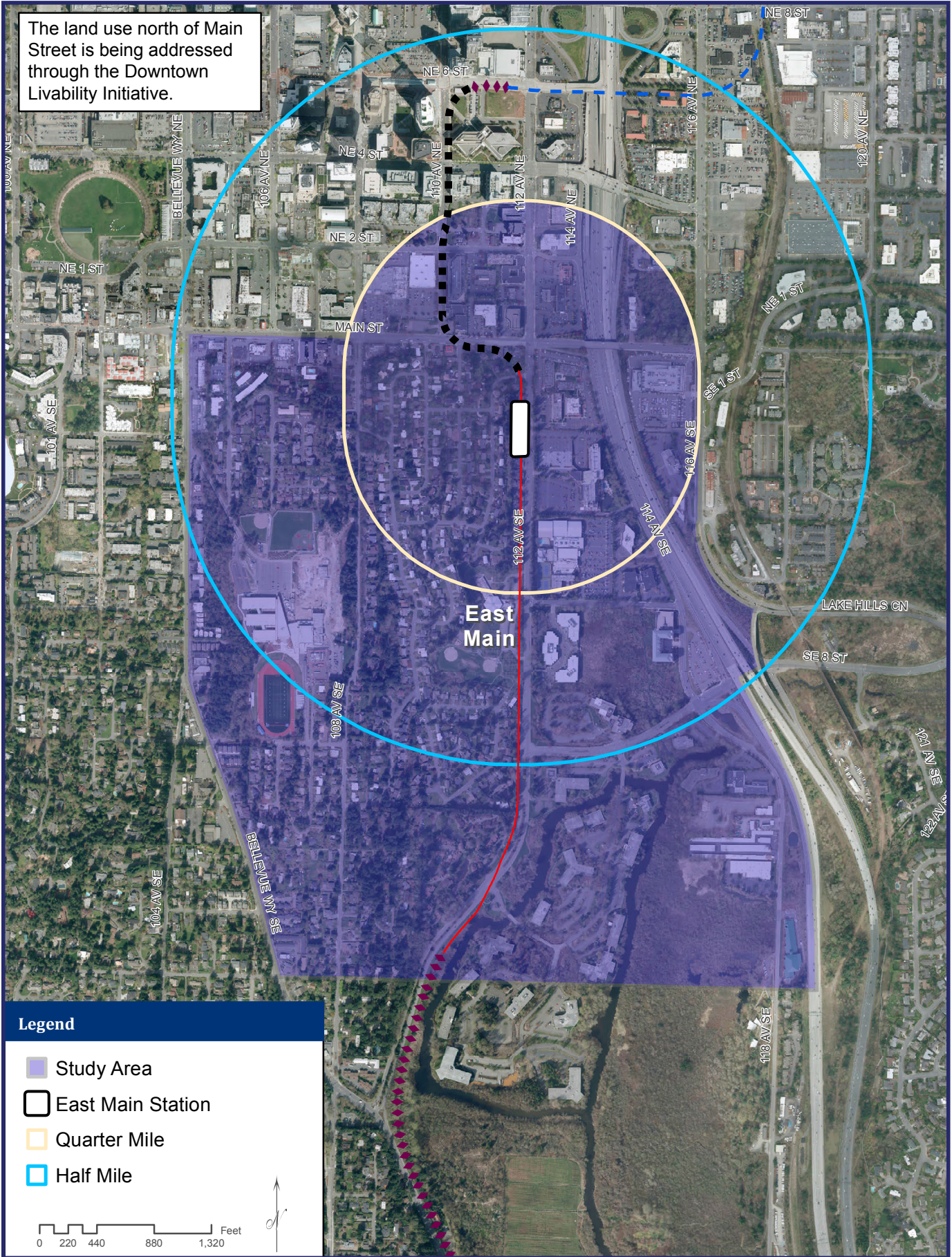


SE 1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE CLOSED at 112<sup>TH</sup> Ave SE



SE 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET CLOSED at 112<sup>TH</sup> Ave SE

The land use north of Main Street is being addressed through the Downtown Livability Initiative.



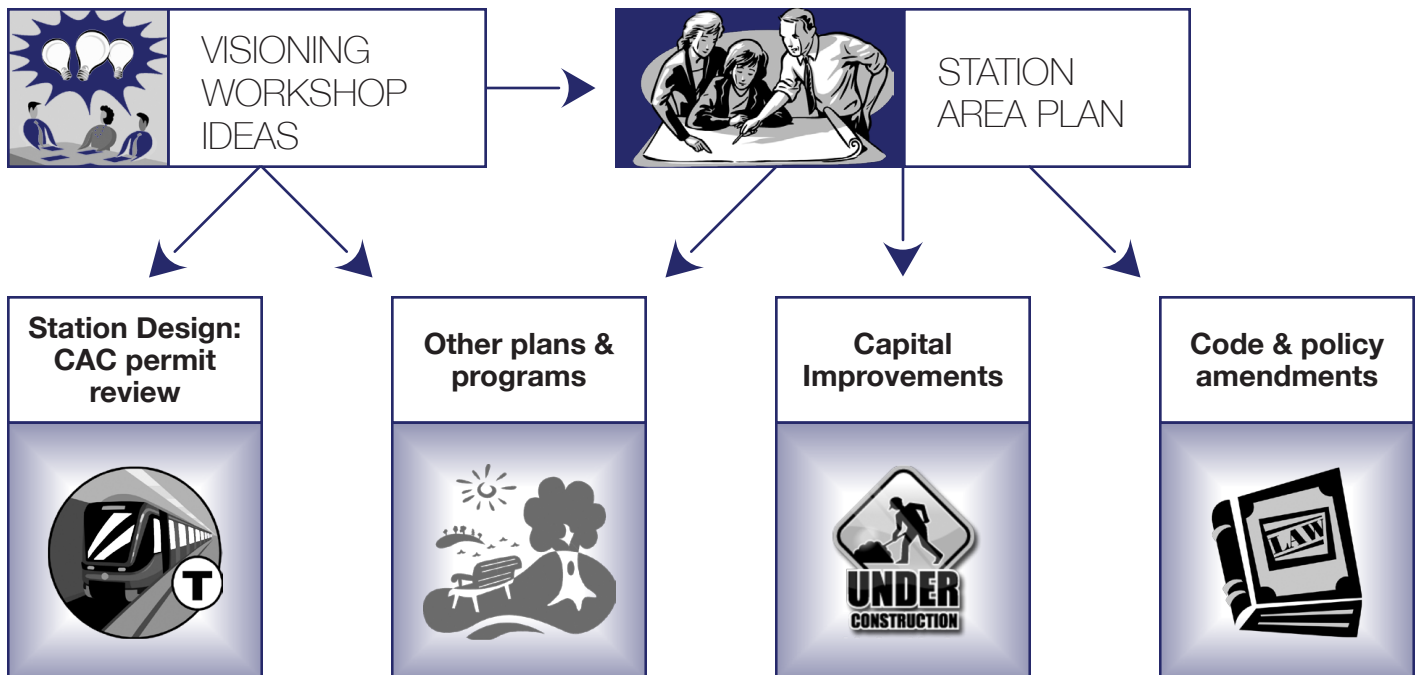
**Legend**

- Study Area
- East Main Station
- Quarter Mile
- Half Mile

0 220 440 880 1,320 Feet



# NEXT STEPS



East Main Station Area Planning  
**CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The East Main Station Area Planning Citizen Advisory Committee (East Main CAC)—a group of 11 residents and business owners from the study area—was appointed by the City Council in August 2014.

The group will work with city staff and the community to identify opportunities and concerns to be studied and addressed in the East Main Station Area Plan. At the end of an approximately year-long process, the East Main CAC will make recommendations to the City Council about which strategies in the plan to pursue. The East Main CAC will not be addressing the East Main station or the Sound Transit light rail system itself.

East Main CAC meetings are public and occur the fourth Tuesday of each month in room 1E-113 of City Hall from 4:00–6:00 p.m. Public comment is available at the start and end of each meeting.

## Follow-up & Contact Information

### CITY OF BELLEVUE

**Kate March** • (425) 452-2055  
 kmarch@bellevuewa.gov  
 www.bellevuewa.gov/light-rail.htm

*For questions about Bellevue's work on light rail including station area planning, permitting, etc.*

### SOUND TRANSIT

**Luke Lamon** • (206) 903-7469  
 Luke.Lamon@soundtransit.org  
 www.soundtransit.org/Projects-and-Plans/East-Link-Extension

*For questions about Sound Transit's work on light rail.*