

Motion No. M2021-81

Identify the Preferred Alternative for the Operations and Maintenance Facility South Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Meeting:	Date:	Type of action:	Staff contact:
System Expansion Committee Board	12/09/2021 12/16/2021	Recommend to Board Final action	Curvie Hawkins, Project Development Director OMF South Chelsea Levy, Director, South Corridor Development

Proposed action

Identifies a preferred alternative of the three alternatives for further study in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Operations and Maintenance Facility South.

Key features summary

- This action identifies the preferred alternative site for the Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) South and authorizes staff to complete the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the preferred alternative and other alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIS, and complete preliminary engineering for the preferred site.
- The Final EIS will respond to comments received on the Draft EIS, including suggestions for design modifications.
- The Board will not make a final decision on the project to be built until after publication of the Final EIS, which is anticipated in Q4 2022.

Alternatives for Consideration

The site alternatives below were evaluated in the Draft EIS and can be considered by the Board for identification as the preferred site, per Board Motion No. M2019-50:

- **Midway Landfill and Interstate 5 (I-5) in the City of Kent** - The Midway Landfill Alternative, a Superfund site, is an approximately 68-acre site south of South 246th Street, west of and adjacent to I-5, mostly on the former landfill. It includes connections to the Federal Way Link Extension mainline via lead tracks between the Kent/ Des Moines and South 272nd Street Stations. Because of the unique nature of the landfill, three below ground, site preparation design options, to address ground settlement were evaluated.
- **South 336th Street and I-5 in the City of Federal Way** - The South 336th Street Alternative is an approximately 59-acre site west of I-5 and south of South 336th Street, with approximately 1.4 miles of mainline track from the Federal Way Link Extension terminus to the site.
- **South 344th Street and I-5 in the City of Federal Way** - The South 344th Street Alternative is an approximately 65-acre site west of I-5 and north of South 344th Street, with approximately 1.8 miles of mainline tracks from the Federal Way Link Extension terminus to the site.

Background

To expand the Link light rail system consistent with the voter approved ST3 Plan, Sound Transit needs additional facilities to store, maintain, and deploy a larger fleet of light rail vehicles. Sound Transit has an existing OMF at South Forest Street in Seattle and has built a second facility in Bellevue. Two additional OMFs, one in the North Corridor and one in the South Corridor, are needed as the system wide fleet expands to more than 400 total light rail vehicles. The Board adopted target schedule for the project is 2029 and the affordable schedule is 2029. Based on current cost estimates and revenue projections, there is no affordability gap for the South 336th Street and S. 344th Street Alternatives and an affordability gap of \$0.6B to \$1.1B depending on the below ground site preparation design options for the Midway Landfill Alternative in 2019\$.

No federal funds are planned to be used for this project. As the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) lead agency, Sound Transit determined that the proposed project may have probable significant adverse environmental impacts. Therefore, Sound Transit prepared a Draft EIS for the project.

Beginning in early 2018, Sound Transit conducted early scoping resulting in 24 potential sites which were identified by the public during early scoping and through a series of internal workshops with Sound Transit staff and the consultant team. The sites were then evaluated through a prescreening and alternatives evaluation. From the evaluation process, six sites were identified as potential alternatives during the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scoping period.

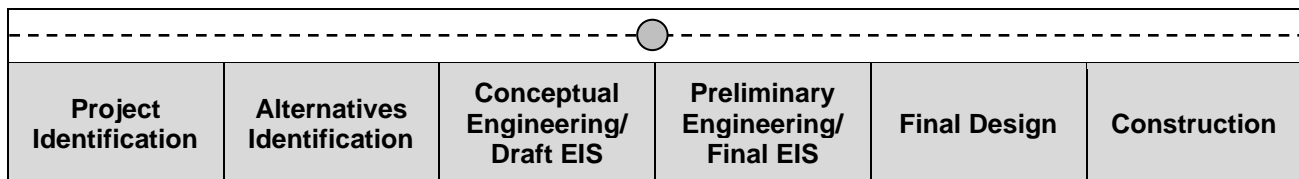
In early 2019, the potential site alternatives were presented to the agencies, tribes, and the public during scoping, and in May 2019, the Sound Transit Board identified three project alternatives for evaluation in the Draft EIS: Midway Landfill Alternative, the South 336th Street Alternative, and the South 344th Street Alternative.

The South 336th Street and South 344th Street Alternatives are south of the FWLE terminus. Consequently, these alternatives require approximately 1.4 miles and 1.8 miles respectively of the TDLE mainline guideway to be built in advance to reach the sites. This mainline track will be built as part of the Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) regardless of which OMF South alternative is selected.

Sound Transit issued the Draft EIS on March 5, 2021, and accepted comments through April 19. Public engagement during the comment period is described below in the Public Involvement section of this report.

Staff anticipates coming before the ST Board for approval of consultant phase 3 scope schedule and budget in Q1 2022.

Project status



Projected completion date for Phase 2: Q1 2022

Project scope, schedule and budget summary are located on page 120 of the September 2021 Link Light Rail Program Progress Report.

Fiscal information

Although there is no direct fiscal action associated with the proposed action, the final alternative selection may have fiscal impacts as to the design and construction of the project. Those impacts will be addressed during future actions as they are presented.

Disadvantaged and small business participation

Not applicable to this action.

Title VI compliance

Per Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, FTA Circular 47012.1B, ST is required to conduct a Title VI Facility Equity Analysis to determine whether any OMF South location would result in a disparate impact to populations based on race, color, or national origin. *Title VI FEA conclusion: No disparate impacts for any OMF South location.*

Public involvement

The OMF South project held a Draft EIS public comment period from March 5 to April 19. An online open house was available for the duration of the extended 45-day comment period. Two online public meetings were held during the comment period, where participants could learn and ask questions about the OMF South and provide formal verbal comments during the hearing portion of the meeting. Over 2,400 visitors visited the online open house, over 120 people attended the online public meetings, and over 270 written communications were received during the comment period. Online open house content was translated into Spanish, Korean, and Russian. Live interpreters of those same languages were available during the online public meetings.

Sound Transit proactively engaged with property owners before the Draft EIS public comment period, and that engagement continues. Letters were sent to all properties identified in the Draft EIS as having a permanent potential impacts. These letters provided formal notification of the Draft EIS public comment period and included a link for groups and individuals to schedule a briefing with Sound Transit staff to discuss the project and next steps. The engagement team also followed up with these potentially impacted properties by phone to confirm receipt of the letter.

Sound Transit reached out to community groups, organizations, and property owner groups to provide project briefings during the OMF South DEIS comment period. Sound Transit prioritized organizations that serve historically excluded communities. For organizations that declined a briefing, a toolkit was provided to make it easy for them to share information about the DEIS comment period to their respective networks.

Time constraints

The OMF South must open by 2029 to support the delivery and commissioning of light rail vehicles (LRVs) for light rail extensions realignment identified to open in 2032, including Tacoma Dome Link Extension and West Seattle Link Extension.

Identification of the preferred alternative was planned for summer 2021. Further delay would create an impact to the opening of the OMF South which could result in a delay in the openings of Tacoma Dome and West Seattle Link Extension projects due to an inability to receive and commission LRVs.

Prior Board/Committee actions

Motion No. M2020-26: Authorized the chief executive officer to execute a Partnering Agreement with the City of Kent for the Operations and Maintenance Facility South project.

Motion No. M2019-50: Identified Link Operations and Maintenance Facility South site alternatives for study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Motion No. M2018-62: Authorized the chief executive officer to execute an Agreement with the City of Federal Way for Partnering on the Tacoma Dome Link Extension and OMF South Projects.

Environmental review – KH 11/30/21

Legal review – AJP 12/3/21



Motion No. M2021-81

A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority identifying a preferred alternative and other alternatives for study in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Operations and Maintenance Facility South.

Alternatives for Consideration

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This action identifies the preferred alternative site for the OMF South and authorizes staff to complete the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the preferred alternative and other alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIS, and complete preliminary engineering for the preferred site.

Staff anticipates coming before the ST Board for approval of consultant phase 3 scope schedule and budget in Q1 2022.

Motion

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the preferred alternative and other alternatives for study in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Operations and Maintenance Facility South are identified as follows:

Preferred Alternative

South 336th Street and I-5 in the City of Federal Way

Other Final Environmental Impact Statement Alternatives

Midway Landfill and I-5 in the City of Kent
South 344th Street and I-5 in the City of Federal Way

The Board will continue to consider all of the alternatives and will not make a final decision on the project to be built until after completion of the Final EIS.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on December 16, 2021.



Paul Roberts
Board Vice Chair

Attest:



Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator