

## Mercer Island Transit Interchange

### Responses to Mercer Island Councilmember Comments and Requests for Additional Information

#### I. Additional Interchange Study Info Requests from KC Metro, forwarded by Kirsten Taylor (City of Mercer Island) via email on February 19, 2019

Requests for additional information from KC Metro regarding data, projections and assumptions included in the MI Transit Interchange Operational and Configuration Study:

##### A. Metro Planning Periods

1. In looking ahead for transit needs, what planning documents were used for projects? What timeframe was considered? 2025? 2040?

**Response:** Original planning for the Mercer Island Link Station is provided in the Sound Transit East Link: Bus/LRT System Integration Study dated July, 2014. Metro also published METRO CONNECTS in 2016, laying out a vision for service in 2025 and 2040. Both documents were part of extensive public outreach processes.

Each of these documents predate the Mercer Island – Sound Transit Settlement Agreement, which limits service volumes to no higher than existing bus volumes (approximately 30 buses per hour), and restricts layover. Metro believes refinements to the Settlement Agreement can allow for quality service for Mercer Island, and the communities of east King County that will not be served by East Link, while limiting bus volumes, and impacts to Mercer Island.

##### B. Request that Metro Provide “Bigger Picture” Discussion

- What is the vision for services from MI to Eastside Cities?

**Response:**

- The vision for transit service from Mercer Island to the Eastside is to provide a level of service that can compete with auto travel time. This can be accomplished by fostering efficient multi-modal connections, which allows for reinvestment of transit funding for increased connections to/from the Eastside. Specifically for Mercer Island, this would result in less regional traffic on Mercer Island streets and reduce off-island parking demand at Mercer Island public parking facilities.
- Metro strives to provide the best level of service to its customers. Mercer Island is the logical westbound beginning and ending for routes connecting to East Link from areas of east King County that will not be served by East Link. As opposed to South Bellevue, routing to Mercer Island avoids out-of-direction travel and provides a better connection to/from the I-90 HOV lanes, which results in faster bus travel times, discouraging drivers from parking on Mercer Island to reach Link. These routes would serve two basic patterns:
  - Mercer Island to Issaquah/North Bend (METRO CONNECTS Route 2012); and
  - Mercer Island to Sammamish/Redmond (METRO CONNECTS Route 2206).
- Prior to the Settlement Agreement, METRO CONNECTS identified the desired service levels for these routes *connecting off-island locations* (not including intra-island service) are included in the following table:

**Table 1: 2016 Metro Connects Plan (Prior to Settlement Agreement)**

METRO CONNECTS Route #	Layover on MI?	AM Peak Volume	PM Peak Volume
2012 (to Issaquah)	Yes	16	16
2012 (to North Bend)	Yes	4	4
2206 (to Sammamish)	Yes	8	8
2206 (to Redmond)	Yes	8	8
<b>Total Peak Trips</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>

- As previously stated, the Settlement Agreement limits service volumes to existing bus volumes on N. Mercer Way. However, limited space for layover under the 77<sup>th</sup> Ave Configuration is a more significant limiting factor. New layover will be needed to provide time (approximately 15 minutes) for mandated driver rest periods at the end of their routes. (Layover is needed because Mercer Island will serve as a westbound terminus, whereas existing buses continue on to Seattle). To provide the best possible service under the 77<sup>th</sup> Ave Configuration, Metro will need to maximize layover space on the north and south sides of N. Mercer Way to meet King County Metro’s operational needs.
- Based on preliminary concepts, there is room for up to 4 layover spaces (1 on the north side and up to 3 on the south side). Even under the best scenario, layover space will limit service to approximately 20 buses per hour, well below existing service levels and the desired levels outlined in METRO CONNECTS.
- If both routes 550 and 554 go to South Bellevue, what routes will serve Mercer Island/Eastside passengers not covered by light rail? Is this an existing route? Will a new route(s) be created?

**Response:**

- East King County service will be restructured when East Link opens. Metro will reinvest service hours that are currently used to run buses into Seattle from east King County to provide more frequent service to the Eastside. See I.B.1 for detail (pages 1 and 2). However, there will be a public engagement process prior to East Link opening, including Mercer Island, to develop a detailed service plan.
- ST Route 550 will likely be removed with the opening of East Link and Route 554 will likely go to South Bellevue or downtown Bellevue.
- Provide more information about the 150-175 people who commute between Mercer Island and eastside destinations not served by light rail. What route(s) do they currently use? Why would they not transfer at South Bellevue when light rail is operational?

**Response:**

- This data includes ridership from Routes 554 and 216 – routes that currently serve areas of East King County that will not be duplicated by East Link. We focused on routes that will not be served by East Link because we wanted to focus on transit trips that will still be needed after LINK arrives. Ridership was pulled from three consecutive service periods from Summer 2017 to Spring 2018. We included

eastbound boardings from EB N. Mercer Way and westbound alightings from WB N. Mercer Way. These are actual people who are getting on and off buses on Mercer Island. Daily Mercer Island ridership trips during the following periods from these stops:

- Summer 2017: 174
  - Fall 2017: 153
  - Spring 2018: 170
- To serve South Bellevue Station, buses would have to travel off I-90 onto Bellevue Way, north to the station, and then riders would get on Link and double back down Bellevue Way to I-90. Particularly eastbound, the merge from Bellevue Way to I-90 is extremely congested and involves buses merging across several lanes to get from Bellevue Way into the center HOV lane. From a rider travel time and operational cost perspective, this routing compares poorly with a Mercer Island exit where buses can go directly to/from I-90 via the HOV ramp. Also relevant, Metro has already planned to completely fill the capacity for bus transfers at South Bellevue Station and cannot plan for additional routes there.
  - Current travel times from Eastgate to Mercer Island compared to Eastgate to South Bellevue to Mercer Island assuming via 5 minute LINK trip are 3 to 10 minutes longer in one direction, meaning commuters would see daily travel 6 to 20 minutes longer. This presents an incentive to skip using the bus and drive directly to Mercer Island park-and-ride.

C. Additional Definitions – Layovers

1. When providing information on layover times, what bus activities are included? Are there 3 or more different types of stops?

**Response:** There are active bus bays where passenger are picked-up and/or dropped-off and there are layover bays where buses park for short periods to allow for required operator rest periods and maintain bus schedules to facilitate reliable transit service.

[Such as:]

2. How does Metro count bus stops where passengers load/unload without additional stop time?

**Response:** This would be considered an active bay bus stop (e.g. pick-up / drop-off).

3. How does Metro count bus stops when the driver stops to wait for a train to arrive? Is this a layover?

**Response:** If this were to occur, the bus would stay in the layover bay until it is ready to pick-up passengers.

4. How does Metro count bus stops where drivers exit the vehicle and take an official break period?

**Response:** This would be considered a layover bay.

5. Which of these activities are counted in the layover times described in the Study?

**Response:** Average layover times refer to the time for required operator rest periods (see #4 above). Operator rest periods are generally uniform, scheduled to be about 15 minutes. Metro has an incentive to minimize time not spent providing service. A reasonable range is 10-20 minutes.

D. Ordinary vs. Extraordinary Operations for Layovers and Queuing

1. Describe normal operations for buses moving through the bus/rail interchange.

**Response:** For buses traveling off the island, the general expectation is that buses traveling westbound on I-90 will drop off passengers on the north side of N. Mercer Way, utilize the layover spaces on the north or south sides of N. Mercer Way for operator rest periods and scheduling maintenance, and then pick-up passenger on the south side of N. Mercer Way before accessing the eastbound I-90 ramp on 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. See “TYPICAL BUS MOVEMENTS THROUGH PROPOSED TRANSIT INTERCHANGE” figure attached.

2. Describe extraordinary operations, including whether these happen every day or in what conditions/circumstances?

**Response:** An extraordinary circumstance would be an unexpected event that severely impacts Metro operations (e.g. a major crash that prevents Metro buses from providing regular service).

E. More Detail on Proposed Layover and Bus Stop Space

1. What is impacted by allowing additional North Mercer Way layover space on the north side of the street? Is there a loss of green space? How is the sidewalk impacted? What current amenities are affected?

**Response:** The roundabout design and additional layover/flex space on the north side of N. Mercer Way is still in the conceptual design phase. As envisioned, the proposed layover/flex space may require the removal of up to five trees. The adjacent sidewalk width would be maintained or improved per the City of MI’s design preference. This work would be completed in conjunction with the construction of the roundabout at 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and N. Mercer Way.

2. What are the impacts with a bus stop on 80<sup>th</sup>? Is plaza area removed in from of the light rail station? Is green space decreased? Does this constrict the flow of pedestrian traffic through this area? Will this result in a less pleasing 80<sup>th</sup> Ave SE frontage to the light rail station?

**Response:** The previously anticipated 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE bus stop would have been used primarily to pick up passengers. However, recent transportation agency discussions (ST, KCM, WSDOT, and City of Mercer Island Engineering) have resulted in a change to this proposed bus stop; this bus stop will now be reserved for local Mercer Island buses if requested and would be located in-lane and south of the I-90 EB HOV on-ramp.

KCM anticipates a local bus would stop once every 15 minutes. The estimated dwell time for buses at this location is approximately 30 seconds or less and would only have the potential to affect southbound 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE south of the I-90 EB on-ramp. Traffic analyses at intersections along 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE in the 2017 SEPA Addendum to the East Link Final EIS—

which included higher bus volumes and bus stops along 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE in front of the future light rail station entrance—anticipate these locations to continue to perform at acceptable levels. As such, these conclusions are expected to hold true per this current configuration with lesser bus volumes and a bus stop at a location interacting with few traffic volumes.

As the potential bus stop on 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE (if requested by the City) would be located in-lane, no impact to pedestrian space or flow would occur.

F. Other

1. Please provide a copy of the *Summary of Metro's Needs at Mercer Island Transit Hub Memorandum*, June 2018, as referenced on Page 9 of the Mercer Island Transit Interchange Operational and Configuration Study.

**Response:** The information in the requested memorandum is outdated and replaced by the proper information included in Appendix C, the latter of which was used in the analyses provided in the Operational and Configuration Study. The correct summary of Metro's needs and concerns regarding the Settlement Agreement restrictions have been provided in Appendix C, see attached.

II. Comments from Councilmember **Bruce Bassett**, forwarded by Kirsten Taylor (City of Mercer Island) via email on February 21, 2019

- A. The study speaks to current bus service and notes that the 550 is replaced by light rail and the 554 will be routed to South Bellevue, leaving only the 216/218/219 as an eastside-MI route. I assume other service is envisioned as coming to MI, but it is not described in the report. It would be very helpful to understand the larger vision for bus-rail integration. What bus service is envisioning coming to MI vs South Bellevue vs Bellevue and why is that mix proposed? Mercer Island residents have made the argument that the South Bellevue station is closer to Eastgate than the Mercer Island station will be. Why impose the longer bus trip on transit users? Please provide analysis.

**Response:** See response I.B.1 and I.B.2 above (see pages 1 and 2).

- B. While it is admittedly a parochial point, the bullet at the bottom of page one of the study is in error. While there is an impact on commuters who are transferring, there is no appreciable impact on Mercer Island residents and businesses if bus and train schedules don't mesh. The following three bullets seem to be built on underlying information that is not spelled out in the study. Please share that underlying information which presumably includes studies of various bus routing scenarios together with resulting benefits and costs to riders.

**Response:** As written, the Settlement Agreement prevents layover needed to operate bus service beginning and ending on Mercer Island (see response to I.B.1 [pages 1 and 2] for more information). This would eliminate Mercer Island residents' transit access to all locations on the eastside not served by LINK, and prevent direct connections from those places to Mercer Island. Discussion of the Limited Service Configuration starting on page 10 describes the underlying information for why the negative effects on pages 1 and 2 would occur. Additional explanation is included in I.B.1 and I.B.3 (see pages 1 through 3).

- C. Page 8, paragraph 1, includes a reference to Appendix B, which seems not to exist.

**Response: Appendix B includes the conceptual design of the proposed roundabout at North Mercer Way/77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and was provided to Mercer Island staff as part of the entire study. We have attached it to these responses for your reference.**

- D. The bullets on page 8 seem squishy. Please provide more information on the 150 to 175 daily trips originating or ending at MI—AM vs PM? Origin? Destination? Why would they not be equally served by a rail trip to South Bellevue and bus from there? The last two bullets again rely on underlying analysis that has not been shared.

**Response: See response I.B.3 above (see pages 2 and 3).**

- E. Page 9 mentions a 'Summary of Metro's Needs at Mercer Island Transit Hub' and 'Estimated inbound/outbound data provided by KCM, Sept. 2018'. It would be helpful to see those documents.

**Response: Please see requested documents attached.**

- F. Layovers. Page 10 (last line) says typical layovers are approximately 15 minutes. Page 11, (paragraph 5) says KCM assumed average layover of 15 minutes for each bus. Today, to the best of my knowledge, there are no regional bus layovers at the MI station. Light rail trains are planned to run every 8 minutes. Please help us understand why every bus might be laying over. If the average is 15 minutes, does that mean that some are zero and some are 30 minutes (average = 15)? It would be helpful to have an explanation of the distribution of times of layovers. Are 'stops' counted as very brief 'layovers'? Are waits for trains treated the same as driver breaks and are both a form of layover?

**Response: See response to I.C above (pages 3 and 4).**

- G. In addition to providing predicted conditions at the MI station, please consider providing actual operating information from a station that has similar characteristics. I would be helpful to see what this looks like in practice.

**Response: It is a common practice to provide bus service ending and beginning at rail stations. All stations, even in the Sound Transit service area, have different conditions, and transit networks, making operations different in each case. However, layover, and active bays are nearly always present. The LINK station at Husky Stadium is an example where buses terminate and layover on Seattle streets in the area.**

- H. Additionally, please consider providing two distinct scenarios—normal operations and extraordinary operations (together with an explanation of the circumstances when extraordinary operations might occur). It will be easier, I think, to negotiate normal operations and then consider exceptions for extraordinary circumstances.

**Response: See response to I.B. and I.D. above (pages 2 through 4), as well as the study, which describes Metro's normal operational needs.**

- I. In the past I have asked whether it might be possible, in the scenario where afternoon east bound trains are delayed and west bound buses are therefore waiting, could those buses hold on the downslope of the Eastgate onramp shoulder to westbound I-90, which appears to be long and wide enough to accommodate several buses. Is this a workable alternative to having the

buses wait on Mercer Island? Alternatively, could buses wait on the Mercer Island 80th St. I-90 HOV off-ramp shoulder?

**Response:** In reference to the suggestion of having buses park on I-90 ramps, there is currently a parking restriction in place for all of I-90 in this area and WSDOT would not be supportive of using ramp shoulders as bus waiting areas adjacent to traffic. Freeway on- and off-ramps are within limited access right of way and provide a critical acceleration/deceleration pathway for vehicles entering the freeway. They are designed to allow for safe acceleration/deceleration, visibility, and the shoulders are used as a refuge during incidents. Introducing a fixed object (in this case a parked bus) to a ramp shoulder area introduces a new hazard to an environment where drivers are focusing on transitioning from the city street system to the freeway system. This puts the safety of bus operators in jeopardy and is not an appropriate layover location.

J. The multi-pass 80th station scenario was dead on arrival. A simpler single pass configuration is more plausible, but because it will encroach on pedestrian space, it would be important to understand the impact on the pedestrian space and bus operation scenario. Please provide a plan view showing the 80th station both with and without the 80th bus stop. If these buses are using the 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE roundabout, what advantage is there in stopping on 80th vs NMW?

**Response:** The characteristics of the 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE bus stop have changed; this bus stop will now be for local Mercer Island buses only and would be located in-lane and south of the I-90 EB HOV on-ramp. No impact to pedestrian space would occur. The purpose of the roundabout was to allow regional buses to serve Mercer Island without traveling through the Town Center. Providing a local stop to the south of the I-90 on ramps for local Mercer Island service will reduce street crossings for Mercer Island customers. The formerly proposed bus stop would have provided more weather protection, an intuitive transfer, reduce street crossings, and shorten the distance for those whom walking is a challenge.

### III. Comments provided by Councilmember Wong in a Memorandum dated February 18, 2019

A. In general, I believe MI needs to see the back-up data for the conclusions and summary statements made in the Study.

**Response:** Please see requested documents attached

B. In particular, before MI agrees to modifications that are described in Sect. 4.3 of the Settlement Agreement, MI needs to ask Metro to share information/data that documents its operational needs.

**Response:** Please see responses in section I above (pages 1 through 4).

C. With respect to Table 3 (page 20) of the Study, I would like to see how each party scored a particular goal/objective and any explanation for a party's particular score.

**Response:** The scores provided in Table 3 of the study were agreed upon by the entire Executive Steering Committee, comprised of members from Sound Transit, the City of Mercer Island, and KCM; there are no individual scores. Explanation for the scores in Table 3 are included within the text of this table.

- D. The Study understandably focuses primarily on westbound buses from the Eastside. It may be in the Study, but with the termination of 550 and 554 will there be any buses from Seattle going eastbound on I-90 after 2023? If so, where will those buses get off I-90? Will those buses proceed eastbound? Or, will they turnaround and go back to Seattle? If they turn around and go back to Seattle, what will their route be?

**Response:** As shown in Figure 4, there are no plans for buses between Mercer Island and Seattle once East Link is operational in 2023. It is anticipated that regional buses serving Mercer Island would provide service between Mercer Island and points east that will not be connected by East Link.

- E. Given that Light Rail will reduce the number of non-local buses coming on the Island after 2023, why is it necessary to expand the ST/Metro footprint on the Island (other than the roundabout)?

**Response:** The only expansion of curb space is related to layover needs. As previously stated, east King County service will be restructured when East Link opens. To improve east County service, Metro will reinvest service hours that are currently used to run buses into Seattle from east King County. As indicated in Metro's preliminary vision outlined in the table in 1b, Mercer Island will be the westbound terminus for restructured routes, thus requiring space for short layover periods to allow for mandated driver rest periods. Nearer to the opening of East Link, Metro will lead public outreach to fine-tune this vision and develop a specific service plan.

As previously stated, new layover space will be needed to provide time (approximately 15 minutes) for mandated driver rest periods at the end of their routes. (Layover is needed because Mercer Island will serve as a westbound terminus, whereas existing buses continue on to Seattle). To provide quality service under the 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue Configuration, Metro will need to maximize layover space on the north and south sides of N. Mercer Way.

Metro is committed to providing a range of mobility options to connect riders, including Mercer Island residents and employees, with Link service. Some of the curb space will allow flexibility for the future as new and emerging services and technologies come into play that affect bus service as well as other modes of travel.

The additional curb space also allows Metro to provide the best level of service for current and future Mercer Island residents, employers, and businesses, independent of LINK transfers. The facilities being built at the opening of East Link will set the transfer environment for many years to come.

- F. In the Study there are a few references to the 150 to 175 daily trips originating and ending on MI, e.g., page 8 and page 22. I like to understand who these riders are. What buses are they now taking? What are their options after Light Rail opens?

**Response:** See response I.B.3 above (pages 2 and 3).

- G. Need more information about the ST/Metro timeline. Expecting a decision by the Council during the 1<sup>st</sup> Q of 2019 is unrealistic.

**Response:** Please see project schedule attached. As we are sure you have noticed, the station is already under construction. We need to start the property acquisition process in the first quarter of 2019 in order to complete construction of the roundabout before East Link begins service. A significant portion of this schedule is allocated to a lengthy up to two-year property acquisition process necessitated by the Mercer Island City Council preference for the 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE



Configuration in the Settlement Agreement. Due to the sensitive property impacts, we wanted to confirm implementation of the Settlement Agreement with Council. The configuration being recommended implements the Settlement Agreement given City of Mercer Island approval to modest changes in pick-up/drop-off and layover space on the north side of N. Mercer Way to meet KCM operational needs. In addition, we have been working closely with KCM and City of Mercer Island staff on this project since May 2018.

The transit interchange configurations were developed in an effort to implement the Settlement Agreement's 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE Configuration while maintaining Sound Transit's and KCM's ability to optimize bus service for Mercer Island. In addition to a new roundabout at the intersection of 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and North Mercer Way, each configuration is consistent with key modifications in the 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE Configuration, including:

- Limiting future bus volumes to no greater than existing volumes;
- No routing of regional KCM buses through the Town Center;
- Limiting bus layovers to an average of fifteen (15) minutes; and
- No idling of buses.

H. In addition to a study session before the Council, we need to discuss and plan for either (i) a public presentation by ST/Metro of the configurations with the public being advised that the decision is to be made by the Council and/or (ii) a public presentation by ST/Metro that allows for public comment to be part of the decision-making process.

**Response:**

- Sound Transit and KCM have agreed to be a participant in a public presentation as part of the study session—led by Mercer Island staff—of the configuration chosen to implement the 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE Configuration in the Settlement Agreement. The public can comment at that time.
  - At this time, there are no decisions that require meaningful public engagement as the currently contemplated design (with the roundabout) has not substantially changed from the design presented during the environmental review process, where the public was an active participant in this process. The Mercer Island public and City Council indicated that their preference was the 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE Configuration, which is why this was included in the Settlement Agreement between Sound Transit and Mercer Island.
  - Our intention is to engage the broader Mercer Island community about the landscape design in front of the station along 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and its connection to the future TOD site and Aubrey Davis Park (Master Plan).
  - This study has been focused on implementing the legal Settlement Agreement as executed. In addition, due to the sensitive property impacts, we wanted to confirm implementation of the Settlement Agreement with Council.
- I. On page 18 towards the end of the discussion about Goal/Objective 7 is a statement that the City will reconstruct the trail to a width of 14 feet. While I know that the 14-foot wide trail is what WSDOT and the consultants have recommended in areas where widening is possible, I don't recall formal approval of the 14-foot wide trail. Is my recollection correct? If so, then this sentence should be corrected accordingly.

**Response:** City of Mercer Island staff asked our consultant to include this in the design, which is still in the conceptual stage. We will work with City of Mercer Island staff to revise this text if needed.

- J. It is my understanding that you will provide the Council with some information about the possible retention of a consultant who knowledgeable in this transportation area so that we can have our own expert review the ST/Metro information for validity, etc.

**Response:** The information that DEA analyzed was some of the detailed information you are requesting from Metro. The information you are looking for can best be answered by KCM, as we are striving to do in these detailed responses to Council questions.

K. Limited Service Configuration.

1. The tension I see in the Study and in the Councilmembers' discussion is the failure of ST and Metro to clearly articulate the need for any expanded ST/Metro footprint after 2023 when the number non-local buses is supposedly to decline significantly from its current number. Is ST/Metro planning for future expansion in the number of non-local buses coming onto MI that justifies the need for an expanded footprint?

**Response:** See response to III.E above (page 8).

2. Is the expanded footprint primarily intended to address the layover/bus rider rest period issue?

**Response:** See response to III.E above (page 8).

3. I don't understand the concerns raised on page 11 of the Study about only drop off along the south-side of NMW. I don't see the direct connection that ST and Metro are making because buses heading west will go around the roundabout and then drop/pick up folks on the south side of NMW. The "time" difference/saving from that drop off point to a drop off point on the north side of NMW is nominal at best. I can't see it as a major disincentive.

**Response:** See response to I.B and I.C above (pages 1 through 4).

L. Improved Service Configuration.

1. The only significant change between the Improved Service Configuration and the Limited Service Configuration is the addition of a flexible curb space on the north side of NMW.

**Response:** Yes, and to allow the bus stop on the north side of North Mercer Way to be used for non-local only buses as it is today.

2. The questions/comments in 6a through 6c, above apply to the Improved Service Configuration.

**Response:** See response to I.C above (pages 3 and 4).

3. Does the City own and control the area what is currently designated the "additional flexible curb space?" If not, who does?

**Response:** Yes.

M. Optimal Service Configuration.

1. To even consider this configuration, we need more information about the proposed drop off point on 80<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE.

**Response:** Per recent (02/19/2019) discussions between Sound Transit, City of Mercer Island staff, King County Metro, and WSDOT, the proposed 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE bus stop will now take the form of an in-lane bus stop located along southbound 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE south of the I-90 HOV on-ramp. This stop would only serve local Mercer Island buses. The curb-line along 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE will remain unchanged.

2. What is the proposed area to be developed on 80<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE? The Study only mentions that it would be about 50 feet (see page 16).

**Response:** The 50-foot reference is the estimated walking distance between the light rail station entrance and the formerly proposed bus stop location on 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. It was not a reference to area to be developed.

3. Is there any schematic renderings/drawings on what this drop off point will look like?

**Response:** There will be no construction necessary for this local bus stop. KCM will install a flag (or route ID sign) at this location. We don't have schematic drawings at this point, we will collaborate with Mercer Island on the design on the 80<sup>th</sup> connection to town center as soon as we confirm we are implementing the Settlement Agreement transit interchange design using the roundabout on 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE.

4. What is the proposed impact on traffic flow along 80<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE?

**Response:** This local bus stop was sited south of the I-90 on- and off-ramps in an effort to reduce potential traffic impacts. In addition, local buses currently run with 15-minute headways with an estimated dwell time of approximately 30 seconds. The frequency of buses at this location, coupled with the short dwell time, is not anticipated to result in additional noticeable delays along southbound 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE at this location.

5. Why is such a drop off point needed given its proximity to NMW? It is not a very long "walk" from NMW to the station.

**Response:** The formerly proposed bus stop would have provided more weather protection, an intuitive transfer, reduce street crossings, and shorten the distance for those whom walking is a challenge. Per recent 02/19/2019 discussions with WSDOT, the City of Mercer Island and KCM, providing a local stop to the south of the I-90 on ramps for local Mercer Island service will reduce street crossings for Mercer Island customers.

6. Does ST/Metro plan to have some buses only drop off and pick up riders at the 80<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE point and bypass NMW? If so, why and what buses?

**Response:** This question is no longer relevant per the changes discussed above.

IV. Comments from Mercer Island Councilmember Lisa Anderl forwarded via email by Kirsten Taylor on February 19, 2019

My two areas of further clarification are as follows:

A. Re the proposed 80th Ave. location for pick up and drop off.

1. Is it both pick up and drop off, or just drop off?

**Response:** The previously anticipated 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE bus stop would have been used primarily to pick up passengers. However, recent transportation agency (ST, KCM, WSDOT, and City of Mercer Island Engineering) discussions have resulted in a changed to this proposed bus stop; this bus stop will now be reserved for local Mercer Island buses only and would be located in-lane and south of the I-90 EB HOV on-ramp.

2. Please confirm whether any bus picking up or dropping off at this location will nevertheless turn around in the roundabout. If yes, I will need more information along the lines of what Benson asked in terms of the need for an additional stop so close to other stops. If no, I would like to fully understand the route that the bus would take if it doesn't use the roundabout.

**Response:** As fully described in the transit interchange study, all regional buses would use the roundabout. The 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE Configuration was preferred by the MI City Council—and therefore included as the preferred configuration in the Settlement Agreement—as a means to prevent regional buses from traveling on streets in the Mercer Island Town Center. As discussed above, the characteristics of the 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE bus stop have changed (located south of the I-90 HOV on-ramp and limited to local Mercer Island bus service).

B. Re the 150-175 impacted riders. Do we know if they are Mercer Island residents? Or is it possible they use Mercer Island as way point, driving to the island to catch the bus to the eastside and leaving their cars on the Island? How could we get more information one way or the other on these riders, and the extent to which the Eastlink station could meet their needs?

**Response:** See response I.B.3 above (pages 2 and 3).

# TYPICAL BUS MOVEMENTS THROUGH PROPOSED TRANSIT INTERCHANGE



1. Regional buses from Eastside origins exit I-90 WB via HOV off-ramp.
2. Regional buses drop-off passengers at bus stop on north side of N Mercer Way.
3. Regional buses move to this layover/flex space depending on schedule and/or layover requirements, then pick-up passengers at 5 via roundabout.
4. Regional buses move to this layover/flex space via roundabout depending on schedule and/or layover requirements, then pick-up passengers at 5.
5. Regional buses pick-up passengers from points 2, 3, **OR** 4 (all regional buses use roundabout to reverse direction on N. Mercer Way). Bus movement options: a) 2 then directly to 5; b) 2 then 3 for layover then 5; or 2 then 4 for layover then 5.
6. Regional buses return to Eastside destinations via I-90 EB HOV on-ramp.
7. Pick-up and drop-off for local Mercer Island buses only to Town Center and other Mercer Island destinations.

# APPENDIX C FROM THE OPERATIONAL AND CONFIGURATION STUDY

**Assessment of Settlement Restrictions**

Section	Restriction	Metro Concerns	Impact on Service Changes
4.3 (b)	Bus layovers are limited to no more than fifteen (15) minutes)	Metro cannot limit bus layover duration due to several factors including labor contract requirements and the scheduling flexibility needed to provide reliable service, schedule for legible/clock-face headways, and schedule for timed transfers where desired	HIGH IMPACT -- No ability to connect bus service at this station during most times of day – <u>including local Mercer Island service</u>
4.3 (b)	Bus layovers only during the afternoon peak period (3:30pm - 7:00pm)	Service must be provided at minimum in both peak periods and ideally throughout the day.	HIGH IMPACT -- No ability to connect bus service at this station during most times of day – <u>including local Mercer Island service.</u>
4.2 (a) 4.3 (a)	All bus drop-off, pick-up, and layover (other than for local Mercer Island buses) on south side of North Mercer Way	Limited/insufficient curb space. Adds delay for inbound passengers/buses that have to navigate the roundabout at 77 <sup>th</sup> before dropping off passengers.	MODERATE IMPACT -- Constrains the amount of off-island service than can connect to Link at this station. Some integration still feasible but exact routes unknown.
4.2 (c)	Bus volumes on North Mercer Way should not exceed current volumes, except local buses	Not a major concern given high volumes of existing 550, 554, and other routes that will be discontinued or revised	LOW IMPACT
4.2 (b)	Routing of buses will keep circulation of all but local (on-island only) buses off SE 27th Street, except in emergency or unexpected situations.	Not a major concern if roundabout is constructed and can safely accommodate buses.	LOW IMPACT
4.3 (b)	Except as to buses running entirely on electrical (battery) power, there will be no idling of buses other than during actual pick-up and drop-off of passengers or while waiting in traffic.	Not a major concern. Existing practices designed to prevent idling during layovers.	LOW IMPACT

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

<b>Step</b>	<b>Step Details</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
A	Confirm Work Plan and Goals for Interchange with MI and KCM	Q2 2018
B	Transit Interchange Operational and Configuration Study	Q3 2018 – Q1 2019
B1	Executive Steering Committee Review and Recommendation on Preferred Configuration	December 2018 – February 2019
C	Mercer Island City Council consultation	Q1 2019
D	Property Acquisition and Relocation Assistance	Q1 2019 – Q3 2020 (estimated)
D1	ROW Certification/ST Board Approval	Q1 – April 2019
D2	Appraisal, Negotiation, and potential Condemnation	Q2 2019 – Q3 2020
E	30% Design of Preferred Option including 80 <sup>th</sup> Avenue SE Street Design and Pedestrian/Bike Access	Q2 – Q3 2019
F	Contract Procurement for Final Design	Q2 2019 – Q2 2020
G	Procurement for Construction	Q2 2020 – Q4 2020
H	Construction of Transit Interchange facility (must be complete before Systems work begins)	Q4 2020 – Q2 2022 (estimated)
I	ROW Conveyance to MI	TBD



# APPENDIX B FROM THE OPERATIONAL AND CONFIGURATION STUDY