



City of Bellevue East Link Light Rail Noise Control Fact Sheet April 2016

What is East Link?

The [East Link Extension Light Rail](#) project is a 14-mile extension of Sound Transit’s regional mass light rail transit system. Ten East Link stations will serve Seattle, Mercer Island, South Bellevue, downtown Bellevue, Bel Red (Bellevue) and the Overlake area in Redmond. Six of the stations are located within Bellevue city limits.

The City of Bellevue and Sound Transit agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) ensuring the two agencies will coordinate and collaborate during the design, permitting and construction of East Link and the Operations & Maintenance Satellite Facility. This collaboration is to ensure that traffic impacts are minimized, neighborhoods and businesses are accessible and informed and business needs and community concerns are addressed. To view the MOU, go to bellevuewa.gov/light-rail.



East Link Extension map
(Source: Sound Transit)

How is East Link operational noise being addressed?

The City is currently addressing operational noise (e.g. noise from trains) primarily through its Design and Mitigation Permit (DMP) process. The East Link light rail is a permitted use under Bellevue’s land use code and its construction and operation, including the guideway system and supporting infrastructure, is governed by the DMP process. The DMPs for the segments of South Bellevue (issued Jan. 2016), BelRed (issued April 2015), Central Bellevue and the Spring District/120th Station address operational. To view approved DMPs, go to bellevuewa.gov/light-rail.



Sound Transit light rail vehicle (train) on guideway
(Source: Sound Transit)

Data from completed Noise & Vibration Impact Assessment Reports for the South Bellevue, Downtown and BelRed segments, and the Winters House and Mercer Slough Nature Park also supported conditions of approval in the DMPs. However, conditions vary within project segment.

Noise from the operation of light rail includes wheel/rail interface, train-mounted warning devices, and track cross overs, among other sources. Noise is also generated from stationary sources such as pedestrian-audible warning

South Bellevue Noise Studies

Noise studies conducted in the South Bellevue residential area concluded that the level of nighttime ambient noise – primarily caused by traffic – is typically louder than the noise the light rail trains will make.

systems and public address systems at stations, electrical transformers, and traction power substations. Noise from light rail train operation is exempt from the maximum noise limits set by City code between the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. (Bellevue City Code 9.18.020.B.5). Also, City code exempts noise from certain safety features associated with light rail operation.

The Federal Transit Authority (FTA) regulates noise from the operation of Light Rail Transit and during the environmental review of the East Link project, noise mitigation was addressed. Mitigation requirements include installation of acoustic panels, sound walls (including ones with extended height and length), wheel skirts, rail lubricators on curved track, and noise monitoring and vehicle maintenance programs (once trains are fully operational). Train mounted warning devices and public address systems at the stations will be adjusted to lower sound level during nighttime hours (10 p.m. to 6 a.m.).

How is East Link construction noise being addressed?

In addition to operation noise, there will be noise from construction activities associated with building East Link.

Bellevue City Code regulates noise levels and establishes permissible noise levels based on the type of land use (e.g. residential, business, or commercial). The code also defines hours when construction noise is allowed.

- Allowable hours of construction: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday – Friday and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays (except for Federal Holidays); unless otherwise extended with approval by the City.
- Extended (construction) work hours may be allowed for activities such as evening haul routes, tunneling work that must be conducted on a 24-hour schedule, or emergency work. This type of activity is approved through a permit.
- The Code sets day time limits in residential areas at a maximum of 55 dBA (decibel level) and nighttime (10 p.m. – 7 a.m.) at a maximum of 45 dBA.

Requests for “extended work hours” (permission to work outside of these windows) are routinely requested for commercial projects, and are granted in consideration of special needs for the project.

The City has approved with conditions Sound Transit’s request for extended work hours for tunnel construction and certain activities between downtown and I-90.

To report noise concerns or other issues that need immediate attention, call Sound Transit’s 24-hour East Link Construction Hotline at 1-888-298-2395

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Sound Transit – East Link Extension

East Link Outreach
206-398-5465

24 hour Construction Hotline 1-888-298-2395

Get Construction Alerts:

soundtransit.org/subscribe-to-alerts

eastlink@soundtransit.org

soundtransit.org/eastlink