

Tacoma Link Extension

Tacoma City Council
March 29, 2011



Background and History



City of Tacoma: May 2007 Streetcar Feasibility Study

- Citizens Committee Report
- Recommended expansion of Tacoma Link/Streetcars

Sound Transit: ST2, passed by voters in 2008: *“Funds, in the form of a capital contribution, are also programmed to provide for the expansion of the Tacoma Link light rail system if other public or private entities provide matching funds.”*



PT Tomorrow: Redesign of the Pierce Transit’s system with the goal of creating a financially sustainable system that people value and use, and that integrates with Tacoma’s transportation plan.

Partners



City of Tacoma:

- Tacoma's economic development, transportation, and community development goals
- Ability to identify and levy local funding options



Sound Transit:

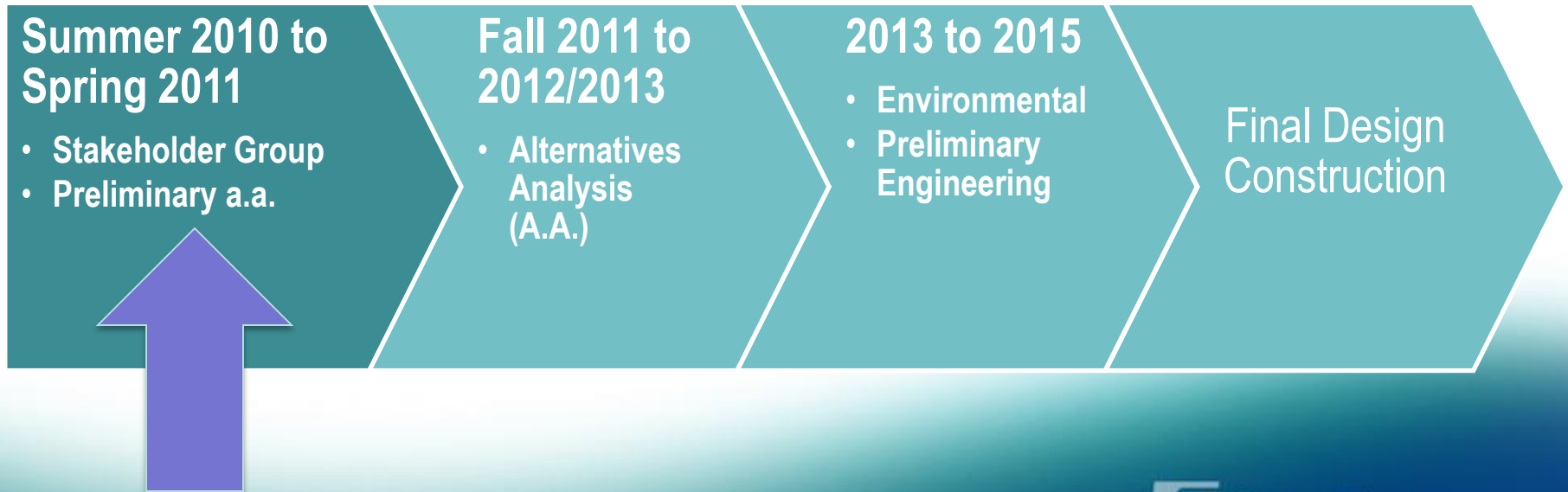
- Technical expertise to manage the project and to design, construct, and operate Tacoma Link
- Funding (from ST2)

Pierce Transit:

- Service integration planning expertise
- Expertise on transit operations funding

Where are we now?

- ***Preliminary alternatives analysis (a.a.) and Stakeholder Group – Spring 2011***
- **Alternatives Analysis (A.A.) – Fall 2011 to 2012/2013**
- **Environmental Analysis and Preliminary Engineering – 2013 to 2015**
- **Final Design / Construction**



Why a Stakeholder Group?



- Stakeholder outreach is a guiding principle of planning
- The group's report helps guide the alternatives to be evaluated and the definition of corridors

Goals of the Stakeholder Group:

- Identify common community objectives
- Provide feedback and comments on various corridors that are based on those common objectives
- Educate the public and decision-makers

Group Membership

Andrew Austin, Transportation Choices Coalition

Jennifer Burley, University of Washington, Tacoma

Eric Crittendon, New Tacoma Neighborhood Council

Ryan Dicks, Pierce County Sustainability

Chris Green, Economic Development Board for Tacoma-Pierce County

Phyllis Harrison, The Art Stop / LeRoy Jewelers

Jesse Hart / Mark McIntire, Eastside Neighborhood Council

Rollie Herman, Hillside Development Council

Cheryl Jones, Allen Renaissance / MLK District

Chelsea Levy, Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce

Mark Martinez, Pierce County Building and Construction Trades Council

Evette Mason, Port of Tacoma

Michael Mirra, Tacoma Housing Authority

Whitney Rhodes, Downtown Merchant's Group

Lois Stark, MetroParks Tacoma / Tacoma Area Commission on Disabilities

Chad Wright, Marine View Ventures

Community Objectives

Serve underserved communities*

- Historically do not receive infrastructure investments
- Economically and ethnically diverse
- Ripe for transit oriented development and new transit markets

Serve Tacoma neighborhoods*

- Attract and retain business and visitors
- Serve existing housing and attract new
- Encourage transportation choices

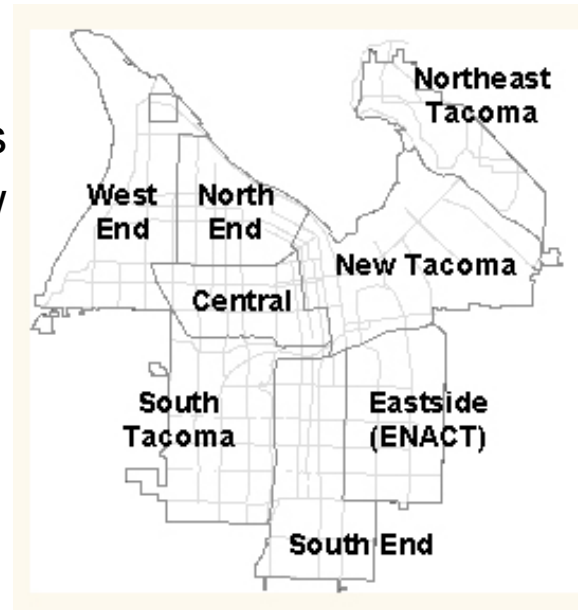
Serve Downtown Tacoma

High Ridership

Regional connections

Low Cost

*Economic development underlies all values and objectives



Other Observations

Connection to Central Link: Regional transit connections are important to the Tacoma community

Economic Development: The concept of economic development underlies all other values and objectives

Cost, Technology, and Geography: Acknowledge the importance and potentially determinative nature of both cost and feasibility

Reducing Trips: Puts a premium on reducing car trips

Benefits and Impacts: All corridors will have benefits and impacts

Other Factors: Station spacing / location, headways, transit-oriented development potential, fares, and parking policies could greatly add to or detract from the success



Tacoma Link Expansion: Stakeholder Group Evaluation Corridors

█ Existing Tacoma LINK
 Mixed Use Center
● Link Stations
 Other Area of Interest

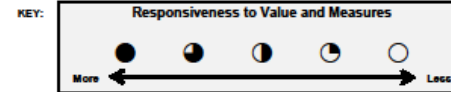
0 0.5 1
 Miles

↑



SOUNDTRANSIT
RIDE THE WAVE

Tacoma Link Expansion Stakeholder Group
01/24/11 meeting
Corridor Evaluation Exercise



Corridor:	Orange	Red	Purple	Yellow	Green	Blue
Description:	(North Downtown - Central)	(Eastside)	(North End - Central)	(South End)	(South Downtown - Central)	(North End)

1. Serving Underserved Communities a. Historically do not receive infrastructure investments – using transit investment to sour other investment b. Not connected to greater Tacoma Community c. Diverse in terms of economics and ethnicity d. Serving areas ripe for transit oriented redevelopment e. Developing new transit markets	Equity	Ability to generate economic development.						
2. Serving Tacoma Neighborhoods a. Attracting business and retaining existing b. Serving existing housing stock as well as attracting new housing around the transit line through increased density c. Attracting visitors, especially residents of other neighborhoods d. Encouraging transportation choices within, to and from the	Neighborhood connectivity	Degree to which neighborhoods are connected to each other and the core. Number of neighborhood commercial areas connected to each other and the core.						
3. Serving Downtown Tacoma a. Attracting business and retaining existing b. Attracting visitors and new residents c. Leveraging pending investments and enhancing investments that have already been made d. Encouraging transportation choices within, to and from the	Mobility	Ability to connect Tacoma activity centers with the core – providing more connections to more places. Number of activity centers connected to the core.						
4. High Ridership a. Because it's user-friendly, reliable, timely, and goes where b. Serve existing high ridership areas c. Reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) d. Competitive for federal funding	Ridership	Relative likelihood of attracting riders. Relative likelihood of attracting <u>new</u> riders.						
5. Regional Connections a. Connecting to Sound Transit's Central Link and SeaTac b. Connecting to areas of transit emphasis (e.g. transit centers)	Access to the region's core	Degree to which regional connectivity is advanced. Transit travel time from downtown Tacoma to						
6. Low Cost a. Leveraging other current transportation investments b. Low cost of construction c. Avoid additional costs	Affordability	Relative cost based on route length.						
Comments:			► Combines reaching higher population density, underserved communities and major employers (i.e. two hospitals).	► Reaches multiple underserved communities and potentially a unique activity center.	► Central orientation of corridor through western Tacoma provides ability to serve multiple neighbors.	► Reaches some underserved communities but most effective if reaches Tacoma Mall area.	► Reaches underserved community and one major employer, but bypasses others.	► Traverses an area of relatively higher population density, but beyond this area the density quickly diminishes.

Least Responsive Corridors

Yellow

- Alignment must reach Tacoma Mall to adequately meet objectives
- Some redevelopment potential
- Connects some mixed-use centers; including Downtown to the Tacoma Mall

Green

- Alignment must reach TCC to adequately meet objectives
- Connects several mixed-use centers and South Downtown

Blue

- Alignment must reach UPS to adequately meet objectives
- Serves primarily single-family neighborhoods outside of the Stadium mixed-use center

Most Responsive Corridors

ORANGE CORRIDOR

NORTH DOWNTOWN - CENTRAL



- Redevelopment potential
- Connects mixed-use centers and Downtown Tacoma

RED CORRIDOR

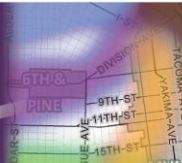
EASTSIDE



- Unique partnership opportunities with Puyallup Tribe and Salishan development
- Redevelopment potential

PURPLE CORRIDOR

NORTH END - CENTRAL



- Highly developed corridor; strong benefits and impacts
- Connects mixed-use centers
- High bus ridership corridor

Key Issues for Policy Makers

Reconciling Qualitative and Quantitative Information:

- Three corridors responded best; but are very different
- Pros and cons to each
- Rigorous, technical planning work must be completed to complement community work

Defining the Scope of the Final Project:

- Preference for project that can fulfill its potential
- A complete project can – but does not have to – be part of a larger transit system

Funding:

- Limited information available at this time, but funding needs to be addressed
- ST2 plan states that the Tacoma Link expansion must be a robust partnership between Sound Transit and some or all of the following: the City of Tacoma, the Puyallup Tribe, the federal government, private interests, and others
- Identify the right project(s) for Tacoma and then determine how to fund them

Recap

6 community objectives, most important:

- Serving Tacoma Neighborhoods
- Serving Underserved Communities

6 corridors identified, three respond best:

- Orange/North Downtown-Central
- Red/Eastside
- Purple/North End-Central

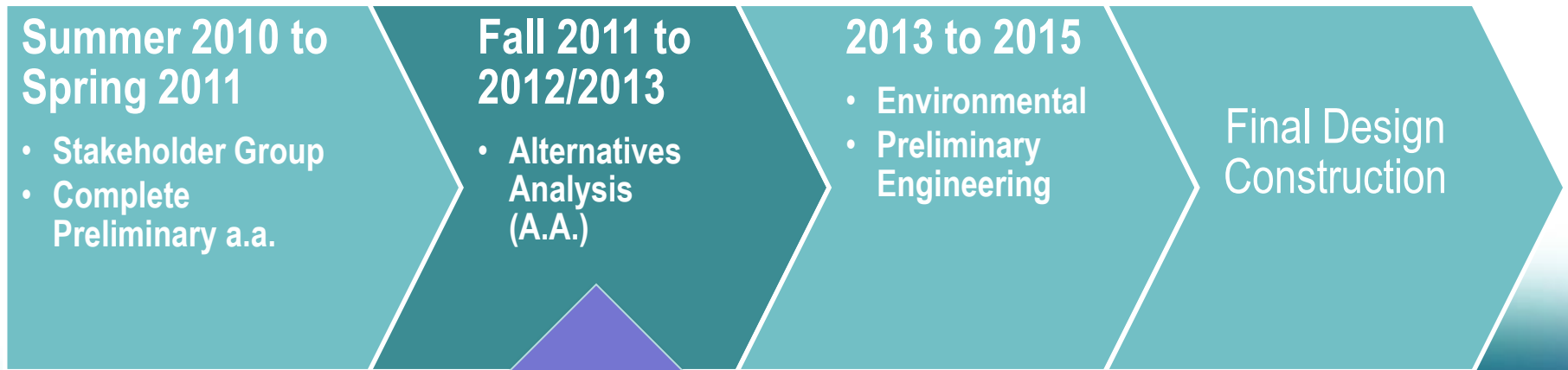
3 key issues for policy makers:

- Complete rigorous, technical planning work before choosing an alignment
- Define scope of project – build a complete project, not just part of a larger system
- Define a funding partnership – look beyond Sound Transit and the City of Tacoma



Next Steps

- **Preliminary alternatives analysis (a.a.) and Stakeholder Group – Spring 2011**
- ***Federal Alternatives Analysis (A.A.) – Fall 2011 to 2012/2013***
- **Environmental Analysis and Preliminary Engineering – 2013 to 2015**
- **Final Design / Construction**



Ride the Wave

