**Background**

**What is East Link Connections?**

East Link Connections is a coordinated, co-led process for improving transit connections throughout the Eastside as Link light rail service expands through 2024.

**Project goals:**

- Improve mobility for priority populations, as defined by Metro’s Mobility Framework (PDF), including under(served) populations.
- Equitably inform, engage and empower current and potential customers.
- Deliver integrated service that responds to Link expansion.
  - Minimize duplication of bus service with Link.
  - Improve connections to Link.
  - Be consistent with Metro Connects and current and future mobility needs.

**Impacted areas:**

Bellevue, Bothell, Clyde Hill, Duvall, Issaquah, Kenmore, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Medina, Mercer Island, Newcastle, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, Shoreline, Seattle (Chinatown/International District, Central District, Mt Baker and Rainier Valley), Woodinville, Yarrow Point

**Routes included in the project:**

Click the route numbers for a map and a more detailed description of the proposed change.

- 270, 271, 311, 342, 541, 542, 544, 545, 550, 554, 555/556, 630, 930, 931

**East Link Connections Phase 1 East Study Area and Routes**

Eastside – This map shows impacted bus routes in the East Link Connections project area in east King County. The identified routes have been chosen because they travel near light rail stations or overlap the path and connections of the rail alignment. | Click to enlarge

**East Link Connections Phase 1 West Study Area and Routes**

Westside – This map shows the western portion of the project area in Seattle, including the Judkins Park Link Station. Most of the routes shown connect downtown Seattle and UW with the Eastside. | Click to enlarge
Understanding the needs of the Eastside

During Phase 2 of engagement, Sept. 13 to Oct. 25, 2021, Metro and Sound Transit worked together to identify Eastside communities’ mobility needs and priorities. More than 2,000 people engaged with us through in-depth conversations with community-based organizations, local employers, mobility groups and a public survey. This feedback helped our service planners learn more about which route changes would be most effective and which need more work.

Several common themes emerged from diverse Eastside communities around ways to improve transit service. Here’s what we heard are the community’s needs and priorities:

- **Increasing service** to major shopping, worship, recreation and employment centers.

- **Providing more local coverage** for easier connections with future Link stations.

- **Decreasing travel times** with *streamlined service along major arterials*.

- **Improving midday and weekend service**.

- **Increasing frequency on major bus routes** for *faster, easier connections*.

- **Adding new routes** to more neighborhoods.

- **Further evaluation** of tradeoffs associated with faster connections and streamlined service.

**How Metro and Sound Transit are using what we learned:**

- To map destinations that are important to the community.

- To address barriers and increase transit use and access.

- To find improvement that will encourage more transit use.