

South Transfer Station II

Jenny A. Durkan
Mayor

Samuel Assefa
Director, OPCD

John Savo, Chair

Ben de Rubertis Vice Chair

Justin Clark

Rikerrious Geter

Rachel Gleeson

Laura Haddad

Brianna Holan

Mark Johnson

Rick Krochalis

Ross Tilghman

Michael Jenkins
Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Aaron Hursey
Planner

Matthew Allen
Administrative Staff

**Office of Planning and
Community Development
Seattle City Hall**
600 4th Avenue, 5th Floor
Seattle, WA 98124

TEL 206-684-0435
FAX 206-233-2784
seattle.gov/designcommission

Commissioners Present

John Savo, Chair
Ben de Rubertis, Vice Chair
Justin Clark
Rikerrious Geter
Rachel Gleeson
Laura Haddad
Brianna Holan
Mark Johnson
Rick Krochalis
Ross Tilghman

Commissioners Excused

Project Description

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) is proposing to develop the second phase of the South Transfer Station facility, located at 8100 2nd Ave S, near the intersection of 5th Ave S and S Kenyon St in Seattle's Southpark neighborhood. Phase I, located north and across S Kenyon St from the proposed site, was completed in 2013. Phase I was never intended to accommodate all solid waste needs for South Seattle on its own. The plan was always to build Phase II to ensure a fully functional transfer station offering the same service level as North Transfer Station. Phase II is a 10-acre closed-landfill site that will include a new recycling and reuse center, the existing household hazardous waste facility, new solid waste trailer parking, and support offices. The additional facility will provide for improved recycling for customers in South Seattle.

Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) second review of the South Transfer Station II project. The SDC previously reviewed the project on May 5, 2016. Since the previous review, the concept design has been updated. The purpose of this meeting was to review the updated concept design for the project. At this meeting the commissioned voted, 6-4, to approve the concept design for the South Transfer Station II with several recommendations.

Recusals and Disclosures

None

October 18, 2018

10:00 am - Noon

Type

CIP

Phase

Concept Design (30% phase)

Previous Reviews[5/5/16](#)**Presenters**

Hui Yang

SPU

Olivia Williams

HDR

Vicky Raya

SPU

Alex Rolluda

Rolluda Architects

Juliet Vong

HBB Landscape Architecture

Attendees

Betsy Haddox

HBB Landscape Architecture

Jeff Neuner

SPU

Ruri Yampolsky

OAC



Figure 1: Site location

Summary of Presentation

The concept design for the South Transfer Station II project was presented by Olivia Williams, of HDR Design, Juliet Vong, of HBB Landscape Architecture, Alex Rolluda, of Rolluda Architects, and Vicky Raya and Hui Yang of Seattle Public Utilities (SPU). The project team provided a brief history of the site, which previously served as a landfill, which has resulted in ground contamination on site. Since the Department of Ecology provides regulatory oversight of these contaminated sites, SPU must provide a design that meets strict environmental and safety standards. Along with meeting these standards, the project team described efforts to minimize both service disruption and community impacts during construction.

The project team then discussed the implementation of the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) toolkit as it applies to this project. The project was described in the context of the South Park neighborhood, which has a higher proportion of people of color, is historically underserved, and has higher rates of health issues associated with pollution and contamination. This team's analysis deconstructed the concept design to study the impact it might have on the surrounding community. The project team described how extra measures of outreach were directed at engaging Spanish and Vietnamese-speaking residents and businesses. Community feedback included support for artwork, better signage, use of recycled material in the design, and having the structure connected to the landscaping.

The next portion of the presentation described the design parameters of a high-use facility which focused on the efficiency of traffic circulation, separation between operators and customers, and wayfinding. Two components of the previous design have been removed: a de-watering facility and a re-fueling facility. These removals are said to reduce anticipated odor, which would be beneficial to the surrounding communities. *See figure 2 for more detail.*

The project team then described the landscape and user experience of the concept design. The requirement of a non-permeable layer between the landfill and existing ground plane limits where deep-rooted vegetation including trees can be planted, since there is not enough space for their roots to be placed above the non-permeable protection layer. The project team did receive a

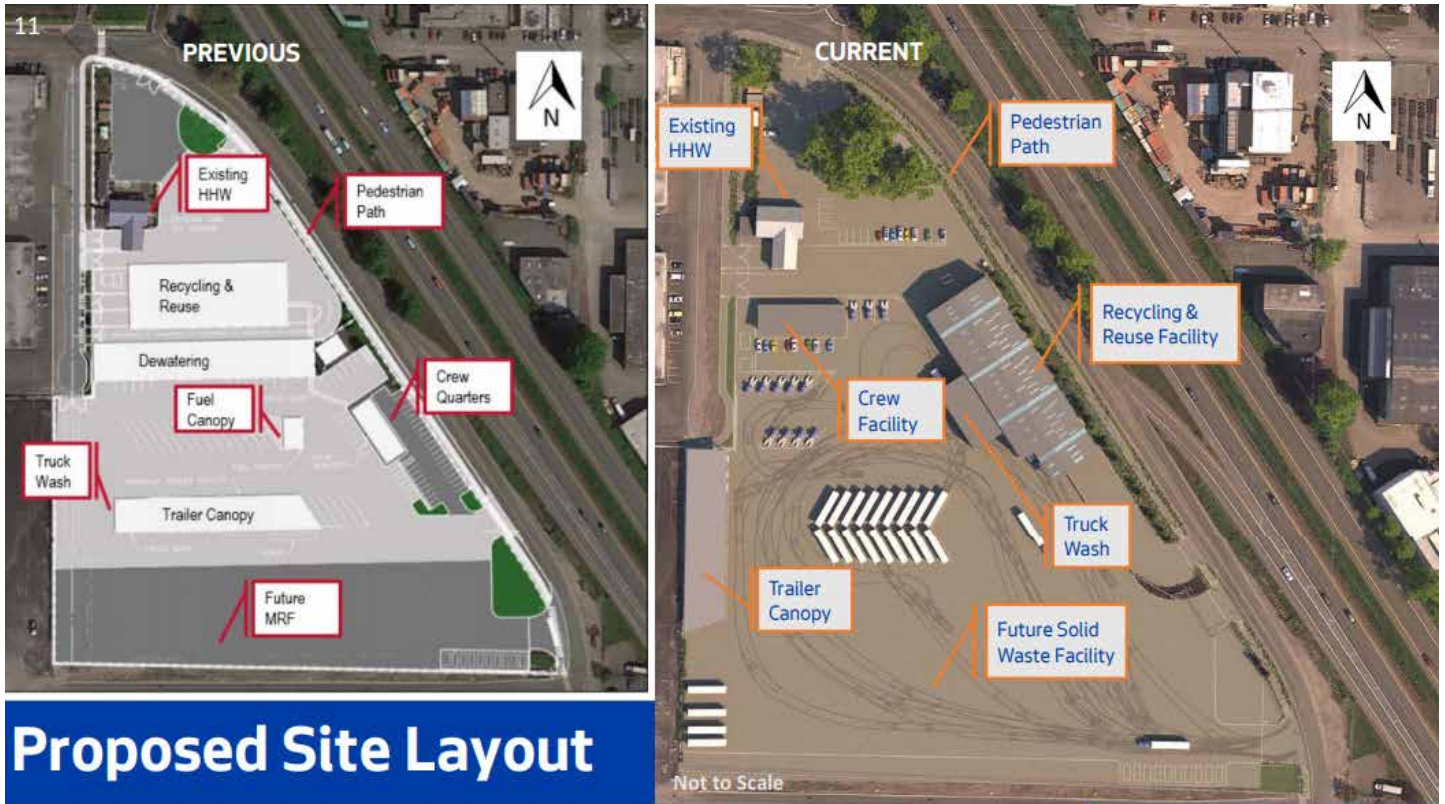


Figure 2: Previous site design (left) and updated site design (right)

variance from the Department of Ecology to plant tree species near the pedestrian pathway along 5th Ave S. The proposed tree species may help with soil remediation but the major benefit is to provide landscaping on the project site, increase the tree canopy in the area, and to enhance the user experience along the path. Other design elements cited include gabion benches, lighting, security fencing, as well as additional vegetation and groundcover along 5th Avenue South. See figures 3 and 4 for more detail

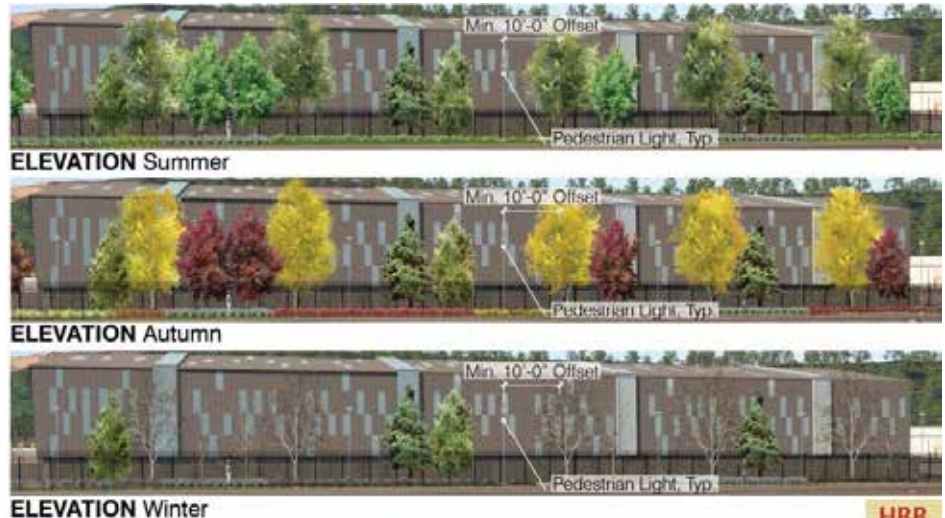


Figure 3: Elevation of proposed pedestrian pathway

The proposed Recycle and Reuse facility will be designed in a similar style as the existing transfer station facility located to the North at STS Phase 1, creating a campus-like experience. Natural light would be provided by rectangular windows and skylight ribs. The Recycling and Reuse building would be constructed with a concrete base and metal siding, with recycled materials used as accents. The interior was described as functional and efficient while meeting safety requirements. The project team described sustainability efforts in coordination with the

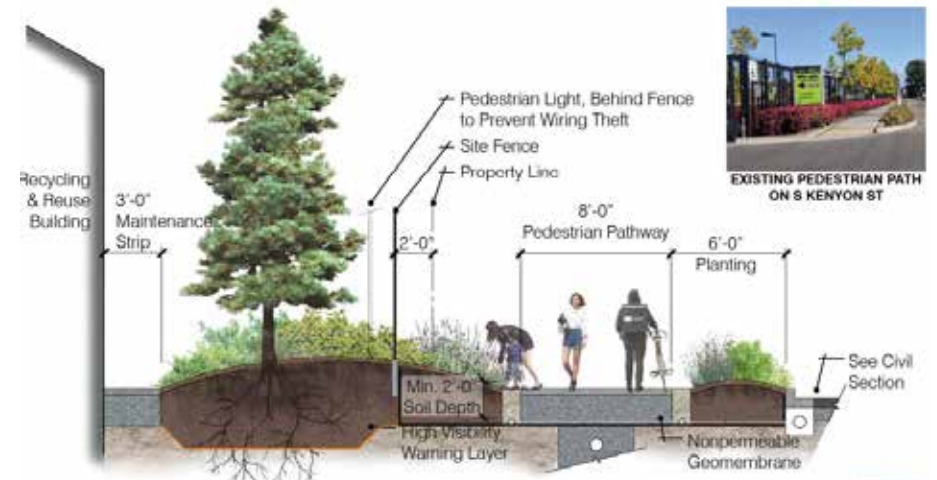


Figure 3: Section detail of proposed pedestrian pathway

Office of Sustainability and Environment. The team pointed to the size, use, and site layout as being obstacles in pursuing LEED certification. The design team instead targeted meeting 'Capital Green' certification, in which an early analysis of the project estimated it would obtain 75 out of 90 credits for the program. Other sustainability goals cited were including additional trees, using recycled materials for asphalt, adding charging stations for electric vehicles, and having the capacity to add photovoltaic panels in the future.

Agency Comments

Ruri Yampolsky, Office of Arts and Culture, stated that the public artist for the project (Adam Kuby) is working with the design team to create an artwork plan for the site. The Office of Arts and Culture is working with the project team to see what the appropriate artwork for the site should be given that the site layout has been updated since the artist's previous concept has been developed.

Public Comments

None

Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Location & urban integration
- Landscape & circulation
- Art
- Building design
- Safety & lighting
- Equity, outreach, & sustainability

Location & urban integration

The SDC discussed how the current proposal (phase II) will integrate with the existing transfer station facility as well as any potential future development. The Commission stated there are still several unanswered questions related to the phase II and potential future developments that could be resolved through the creation of a master plan for the project site, which would address site entrances, building locations, circulation, vegetation, and art. The SDC then recommended the project team provide a master site plan to direct the future use of the site. Commissioners noted the environmental degradation that previous onsite land uses has had on the surrounding neighborhood and encouraged the project team to design the project in a way that can help mitigate issues that were and still affect the surrounding neighborhood.

The SDC then commended the project team for integrating the design of the proposed facility with the existing transfer station. Commissioners also appreciated the addition of a pedestrian pathway along 5th Ave S to connect the existing pathways to the north and south of the project site.

Landscape & circulation

The SDC commended the project team for preserving the existing grove of trees along the northeast edge of the project site. The Commission continues to be concerned with the amount of impervious pavement on site, specifically near the south end of the project site. Although they understood the project team's desire to maintain flexibility for future development and truck circulation, the Commission strongly recommended the project team prioritize providing additional temporary and long term areas for vegetation near the south end of the project site over providing flexibility for truck circulation. Commissioners commented that the project team should use the south end of the project site to explore innovative ways for site remediation during the interim period. The SDC then specifically recommended the project team consider expanding opportunities to use vegetation on site for soil remediation during the interim period. The Commission then encouraged the project team to explore ways to further mitigate the poor air quality within the surrounding area.

The SDC then reiterated their concern with providing too much flexibility for truck circulation. The Commission recommended the project team provide greater detail about necessary paths for truck circulation as a way to reduce the need for impervious pavement.

Art

The SDC mentioned that the art located at the phase I facility was award-winning and well received by the

surrounding community and also noted that the PAAC approved and supported phase II project artist Adam Kuby's previous proposal to "disintegrate" steel containers. Commissioners acknowledged the monumental size of the art at the existing facility and encouraged the project team to include similarly scaled art on this project site, which could also potentially serve as a placemaking opportunity. The Commission then recommended the project team expand upon existing art themes such as the re-use of industrial artifacts to build cohesion and to provide an overarching art plan for the entire campus.

Building design

The SDC commended the project team for creating an innovative facility. While commissioners agreed that there is a limitation to what can be designed on the ground plane, they discussed the possibility of using proposed buildings to serve as a landscape function for the site as a way to increase sustainability goals. Commissioners then strongly recommended the project team explore ways to use the proposed facilities to fulfill stormwater and sustainability goals for the project site.

The Commission also recommended the project team provide greater transparency at the base of the recycling and reuse facility so that activities can be viewed from the pedestrian pathway.

Safety & lighting

The SDC understood why the project team located lighting along the interior of the fence. The Commission then encouraged the project team to be consistent with lighting color, pole design, and scale throughout the campus. Commissioners also encouraged the project team limit the proposed lighting color throughout the site.

Equity, outreach, & sustainability

The SDC highlighted the Recycle and Reuse facility as an area to best educate the community and site users about the entire recycling and reuse process. Several commissioners then commented that the facility could serve as a neighborhood asset for community members who do not currently know that it exists. The Commission recommended the project team explore additional education and outreach opportunities that better connect with the community.

The Commission is concerned with limiting the focus of the sustainability strategy to the proposed facilities. Commissioners recognized that excluding the surrounding site would be a missed opportunity to address sustainability issues. The Commission then strongly recommended the project team analyze sustainability goals for the entire site, not just for the proposed facilities.

Action

The Commission thanked the project team for their presentation of the concept design for the South Transfer Station phase II project. Overall, the Commission appreciated the application of the racial equity toolkit and continued work with community liaisons to conduct neighborhood outreach. Commissioners also appreciated the architectural integration of this project with the existing South Transfer Station facility, the simple approach to wayfinding, and the preservation of existing trees. The SDC voted, 6-4, to approve the concept design for the South Transfer Station II project with the following recommendations:

1. Provide a master site plan to direct future use of the site, which will influence the landscape and artwork potential
2. Prioritize providing additional temporary and long term areas for vegetation near the south end of the project site
3. Prioritize landscape over providing flexibility for truck circulation, particularly in the short-term
4. Explore additional opportunities to use vegetation for soil and air quality remediation
5. Provide greater detail about necessary paths for truck circulation
6. Expand upon phase I art themes to build cohesion and to provide an overarching art vision for the entire campus linked to the master site plan
7. Explore ways to use the proposed facilities to fulfill stormwater and sustainability goals for the project site
8. Explore providing transparency at base of recycling and reuse facility
9. Explore additional education and outreach opportunities that better connect with the community
10. Analyze sustainability goals for the entire site, not just for the proposed facilities.

The following are statements from commissioners who voted against the concept design for the South Transfer Station II project:

Rikerrious Geter – Although I appreciated the proposed planting plan along the pedestrian pathway, I have concerns about the overall sustainability strategy for the project site.

Rachel Gleeson – I have an issue with not having a proposed plan that is defined enough for us to understand what is possible or not possible in terms of additional vegetation and public access. I think that it is unfortunate that it is typical for public utility projects to automatically include fencing around the perimeter of the project site to separate from the surrounding area. I haven't been convinced that there is not more opportunity for better integration into the surrounding urban context.

Laura Haddad – Although I appreciate all of the efforts being made to retain existing trees as well as the use of forward thinking technology, I think the lack of a plan to help guide future development is greatly limiting your approach to sustainability. I would also like for the proposed facility to prioritize air quality and neighbors' health at the same level that truck circulation is prioritized, to have little to no negative impact on the surrounding community.

Ross Tilghman – while much good work has been done to make this a model example of how to develop on a land fill site, I don't think the concept plan fully delivers on this. A lot of my concern is due to the proposed site circulation. I strongly agree with the recommendations to provide greater clarity about future circulation needs.