

Dave Lange, Shoreline (aka Don Quixote looking for windmills)

I have been taking buses out of the North end for a number of years. The closest thing to the station design for 145th was the old Northgate Park & Ride on 5th Ave, behind the Target/Best Buy building. A mix of cars and buses using the same off street lanes for the parking lot and bus stops. Pedestrians had to walk through the Parking Lot to get to the bus stops and buses had to cross oncoming traffic at an unsignalled driveway.

That was replaced by the Northgate Transit Center with the white cone roof, visible from the freeway. It has much bigger parking areas and a dedicated pair of bus lanes around a center station, with stop lights on both street accesses. Pedestrians were fenced into entering the station area near either end.

The third station at Northgate is moving to the road thanks to the rail corridor, advancing ST/Metro designs another step. During all the changes at Northgate, the 65th street Park and Ride in Seattle, under the I5 roadway keeps ticking with buses serving stops on the roadway and Pedestrian access via sidewalks along busy streets and vast parking lots that stretch for blocks. Apparently when you think ahead and get lucky with the design, they don't need to be knocked down every decade. The Roosevelt rail station is passing about 4 blocks to the east with no additional parking. The first Northgate Park&Ride is now a green park.

I've got strong feelings where the 145th station should be and spent part of today looking for some research. Just like a lot of the Transit Oriented Design literature, featuring dumb density, it is full of the get the bus stops off the public roads and use bike racks because you can have a higher density with a cheaper solution. There were some more thoughtful hints for station design. They focused on either picking the features you want and then looking for a location or picking the site and limiting the features that fit. I sent a couple of ideas to you yesterday, but think about what you have seen with the existing 145th station design and grade the current effort against these 4 principles:

1. Segregation of bus and non-bus traffic (that private loop in the station is a full multimodal experience)
2. Segregation of pedestrian and vehicular movement (ditto)
3. Segregation of pedestrian flows (ditto)
4. Segregation of transportation and no-transportation activities (do restroom facilities for bus drivers count?)

We have to do better and the zoning/Development Code being discussed tonight is a good place to start. If it turns out there isn't room for these recommendations lets not assume our cars are different than Seattle or the rest of the US. Lets make a decision to remove the buses from the station and use 5th and 145th for bus stops. Don't do the regular Shoreline response of "We wish and mandate this all fits in this space". Apparently the young designers don't pay attention to their surroundings and are destined to repeat the accidents and lawsuits of past station designs. Including the Metro bus generation where drivers had trouble looking out the windshield toward the near left.