Question #1: Please describe the decision making process by which you will identify the exact improvements and locations to be implemented from the list of potential improvements.

Answer #1:
To identify the exact improvements and locations Metro will conduct a data driven alternatives analysis that will identify potential improvements (this will include and refine the list of potential improvements and locations include in the application), and provide further technical investigation to further quantify benefits for transits and other roadway users. This effort will be conducted with close coordination with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) to gain full support in determining a list of projects to be carried forward into design phase.

The planning phase of this project will include a screening and evaluation of potential improvements. Potential improvements will be developed based on existing transit speed and reliability data, city plans and policies, public outreach, and input from the SDOT to provide a broad collection of improvements for consideration. Improvements will be evaluated based on a series of qualitative and quantitative criteria. Input and coordination from city staff on the potential improvements will be a critical part of the screening and evaluation of potential improvements.

An initial screening of improvements using qualitative information and city input will be completed to screen out improvements that are infeasible. Then, a more detailed and quantitative evaluation of the screened improvements will examine the potential benefits of each improvement in more detail, including transit travel time savings, reliability benefit, traffic forecasting, and cost estimates. This quantitative evaluation will result in a final list of recommended concepts for the corridor. Once confirmed by city staff and Metro, the recommended set of concepts will advance into the design phase. City staff will continue to be engaged in reviewing design plans, and issuing construction permits during the implementation.

Question #2: Please provide more detail on the potential conversion of the route into a RapidRide Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line, in terms of timeline or any future construction projects that would be necessary to convert the project to a BRT corridor beyond those in the scope of the current request.
Answer #2:
The Route 36 corridor was identified in the 2012 Seattle Transit Master Plan (TMP) as a Priority Bus Corridor and the 2016 TMP Update as a RapidRide corridor. King County Metro identifies the Route 36 corridor as a future RapidRide corridor by 2040 in METRO CONNECTS, King County Metro’s long-range plan adopted in January 2017. Metro and the Seattle Department of Transportation are currently defining funding, timeline and phasing for future expansion of the RapidRide Program. At this time, a timeline has not been established for converting delivery of RapidRide along the Route 36 corridor. Future CIPs will clarify how and when the Route 36 will be converted into a RapidRide, in partnership with the City of Seattle and Metro. The RapidRide program in Seattle targets a minimum of 10-15% travel time savings through improvements such as dedicated bus lanes, specialized RapidRide buses with more doors and lower floors for easier boarding/alighting, enhanced RapidRide stations that include raised platforms, and offboard fare collection. Through the Route 36 Speed and Reliability Corridor project for which we are currently seeking funding, Metro plans to implement transit speed and reliability upgrades with the goal of reducing travel times by 5-10% along the Route 36 corridor in 2024, prior to the future delivery of RapidRide on the corridor.

Response to the questions asked during the Route 36 presentation -
1) Calculations of ridership increase and time travel savings:

The Speed and Reliability team sets a goal for corridor projects to reduce travel time by at least 5% and up to 10%. In order to calculate increases in ridership, we assume an increase of ridership of .4% for every 1% in travel time savings (this assumption comes from TCRP Project A-39, Kittleson & Associates). The speed and reliability improvements and transit preferential treatments that we will consider help to achieve this goal and are based on before and after studies from previous projects.