



East Link light rail

Segment A: Seattle, Mercer Island via I-90

Segment Details

In Segment A, there is only one route alternative between downtown Seattle and south Bellevue. The route begins in the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, connecting to the Link light rail system at the International District/Chinatown Station. Light rail will run on the existing I-90 center roadway across Lake Washington. New HOV lanes will be constructed on the I-90 outer roadways, adding 24-hour HOV and bus transit service both east and westbound while preserving the existing number of general purpose lanes.

Segment A includes two stations, both located on the center roadway of I-90 with pedestrian connections to the local road and sidewalk system. Stations would be located at:

- I-90 in Seattle between Rainier Avenue S and 23rd Avenue S.
- I-90 on Mercer Island between 77th Avenue SE and 80th Avenue SE.

Benefits

- Provides access to high quality, frequent transit service 20 hours per day.
- Approximately 5,000 combined daily boardings by 2030 would occur at the Rainier and Mercer Island Stations.
- Meets the City of Seattle's goals to promote urban villages, link urban centers, and facilitate access to employment centers for residents with expanded access to the Eastside.
- Addresses the City of Mercer Island's goals to promote mixed-use development at regional transit facilities and provides improved transit opportunities.
- Adds person capacity of 8,000-9,000 per hour in each direction of I-90.

Travel times*

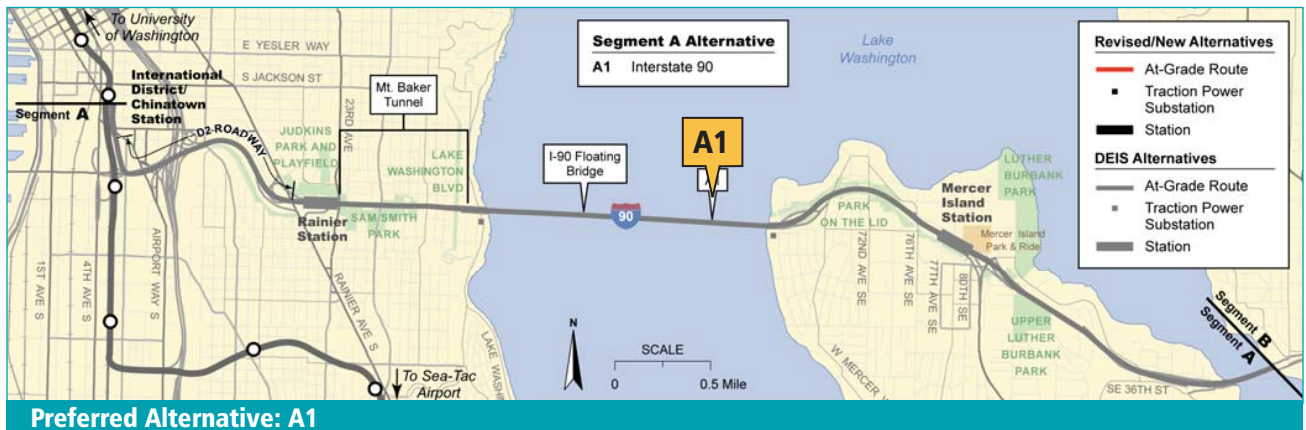
(from Mercer Island Station)

- International District/Chinatown = 10 minutes
- University of Washington = 22 minutes
- Bellevue Transit Center = 10-12 minutes
- Sea-Tac Airport = 45 minutes

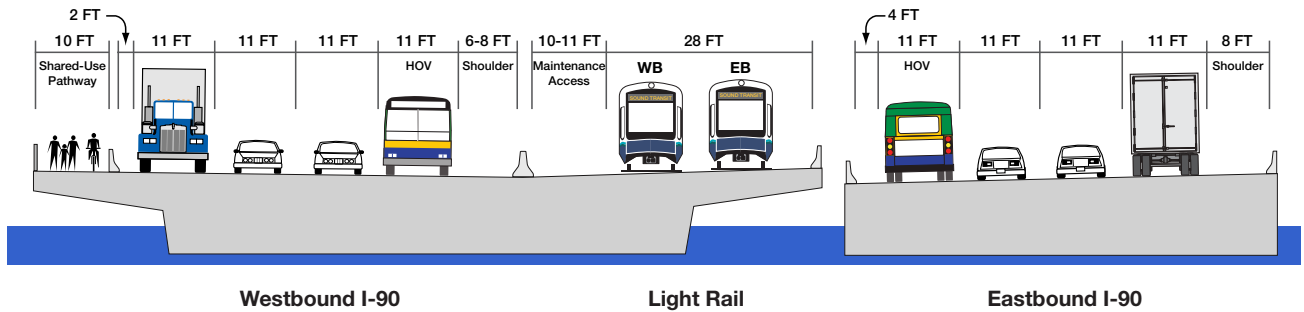
*Reflects preferred alternative travel times

What's new in Segment A?

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) determined that segments of I-90 were eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). However, I-90 was designed for conversion to rail transit and the East Link preferred alternative does not alter the integrity of the historic portions of the roadway.



Preferred Alternative: A1



I-90 Two-Way Transit Project with East Link light rail

Light Rail on I-90

The I-90 floating bridge was designed and constructed with the intention of supporting future rail. Studies by WSDOT confirmed that the I-90 floating bridge can support the weight of light rail after conducting a light rail simulation test using heavily loaded trucks to test how the floating bridge responded to the weight and movement.

An Independent Review Team (appointed by the Washington State Legislature) looked at technical issues related to running light rail on the I-90 bridge. Their conclusion was that through careful design and testing the bridge can accommodate light rail.

For more information:

Project Web page:

www.soundtransit.org/eastlink

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Simulation of light rail on I-90