

Ballard Link Extension

Scoping meeting materials

November 2024



Sound Transit future service

Link service plan: 2042

1

Ballard–Tacoma

2

Mariner–Redmond*

3

Everett–West Seattle*

T

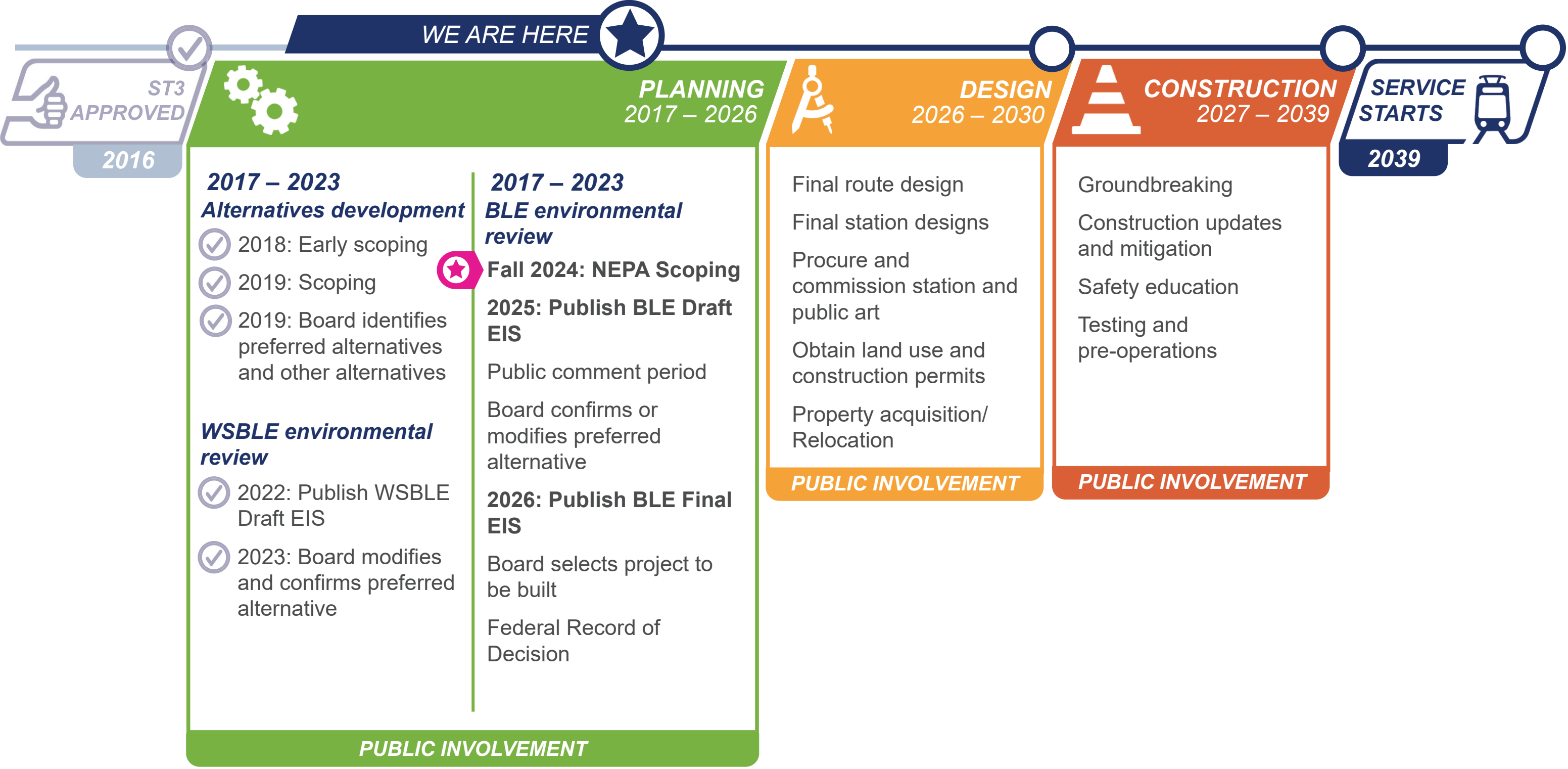
Tacoma Dome–
St Joseph



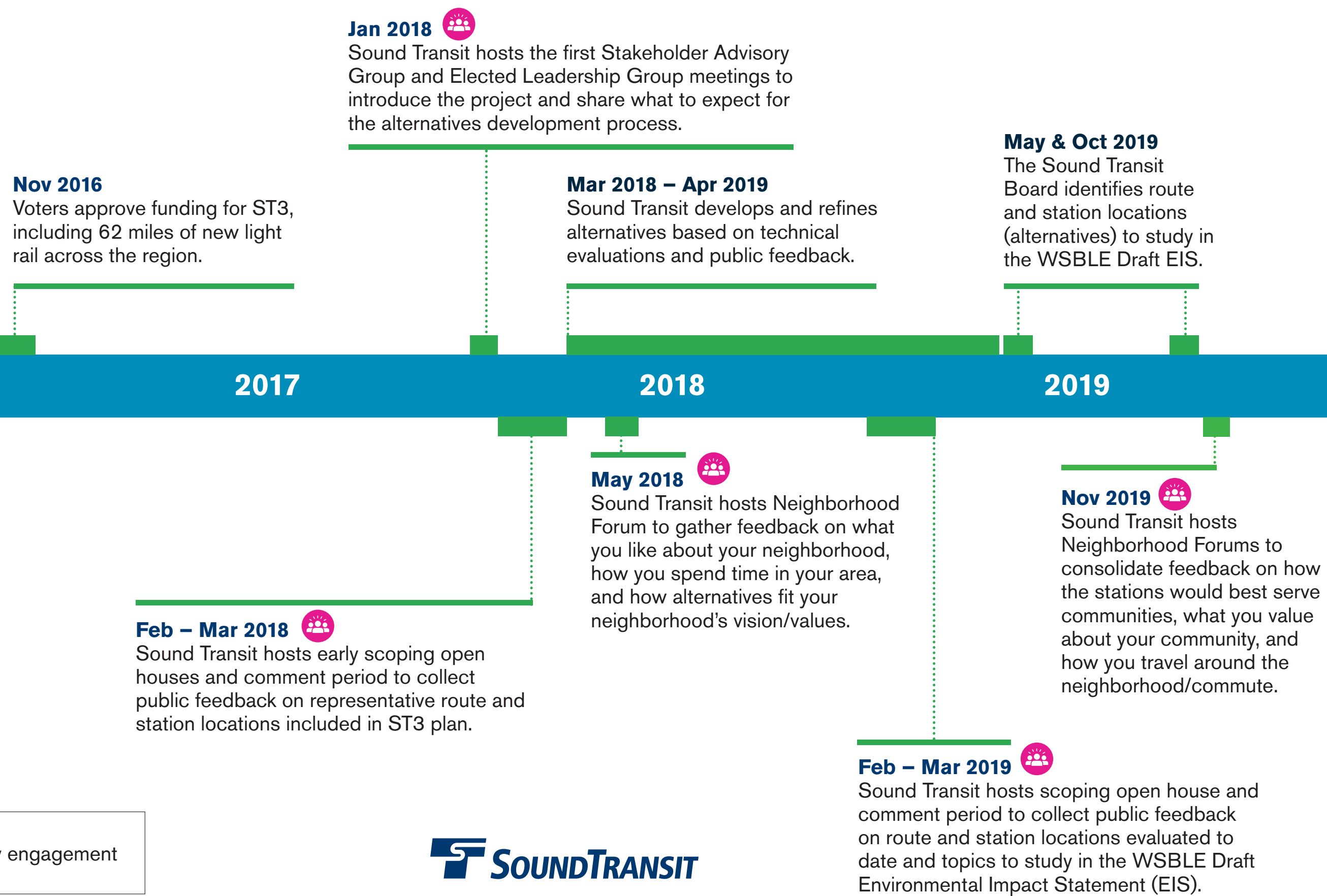
Transfer



Ballard Link Extension project timeline



West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions alternatives development



Community engagement

West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions Draft EIS

Jan 2022



Sound Transit publishes WSBLE Draft EIS for public review and 90-day public comment period and hosts an open house. Sound Transit publishes the Station Planning Progress Report alongside the Draft EIS to help communities understand the opportunities and challenges of the different alternatives.

Sep 2023

Given additional environmental review needed for project refinements for BLE resulting from the Board action in March 2023, environmental review for the WSLE and BLE projects proceed on different timelines.

Aug 2022 – Mar 2023



Sound Transit conducts further studies that included six workshops and open houses and three online surveys.

2020

2021

2022

2023

Nov 2021 – May 2022



Sound Transit kicks off Community Advisory Groups to review and discuss Draft EIS findings.

Jul 2022

Sound Transit Board identifies preferred route and station locations for West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) and requests further studies for the Ballard Link Extension (BLE).

Mar & Jul 2023

Sound Transit Board identifies a preferred alternative for BLE.



Community engagement



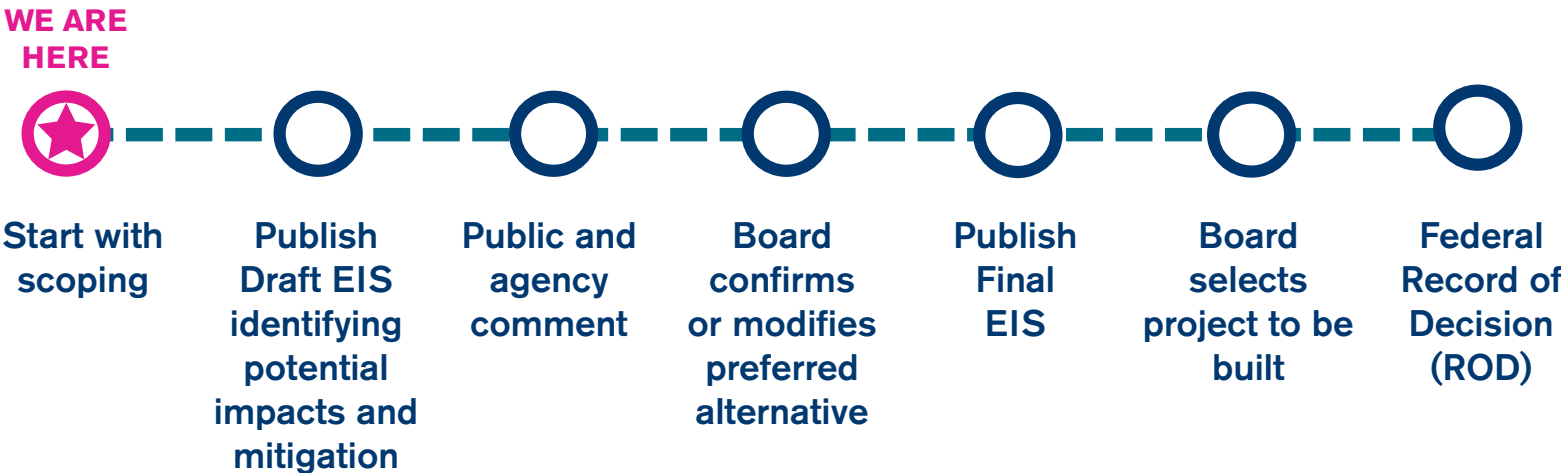
The EIS process

What is an EIS?

In partnership with the Federal Transit Administration, we will publish a new National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Supplemental State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Draft EIS for the Ballard Link Extension with analysis of new alternatives and project refinements.

The Draft EIS will provide agencies and the public with an understanding of environmental consequences and assist in decision making.

The EIS process:



What's typically studied in an EIS?



Transportation

- Regional transportation
- Transit services
- Arterial and local street systems
- Parking
- Non-motorized facilities
- Navigation
- Freight



Natural Environment

- Air quality and greenhouse gas emissions
- Ecosystems
- Water resources
- Geology and soils



Built Environment

- Acquisitions, displacements and relocations
- Noise and vibration
- Economic effect
- Visual resources
- Parks and recreation
- Land use
- Energy
- Hazardous materials
- Public services
- Historic and archaeological resources
- Social resources, community facilities and neighborhoods
- Electromagnetic fields
- Utilities

What is NEPA scoping?

Why are we scoping (again)?

Next year, Sound Transit will publish a new BLE Draft EIS that builds upon the 2022 WSBLE Draft EIS with analysis of new alternatives and project refinements.

The first stage in this process is a scoping comment period to collect your feedback. **However, we are not starting over.**

We have been collecting public input on the project since planning began in 2017, and all past comments will be carried forward in the new BLE Draft EIS.

For the BLE, scoping is:

- ✓ A part of the federal environmental review process
- ✓ An extended 45-day public comment period
- ✓ A process that seeks public feedback on the scope of the EIS
- ✓ Something that informs Board decision on what to study in EIS*

* Scope of EIS also subject to Federal Transit Administration oversight



What feedback is collected during the scoping comment period?

The **scoping comment period** seeks feedback related to...

- Project Purpose and Need
- Alternatives to be studied in the EIS
- Potential topics to study in the EIS

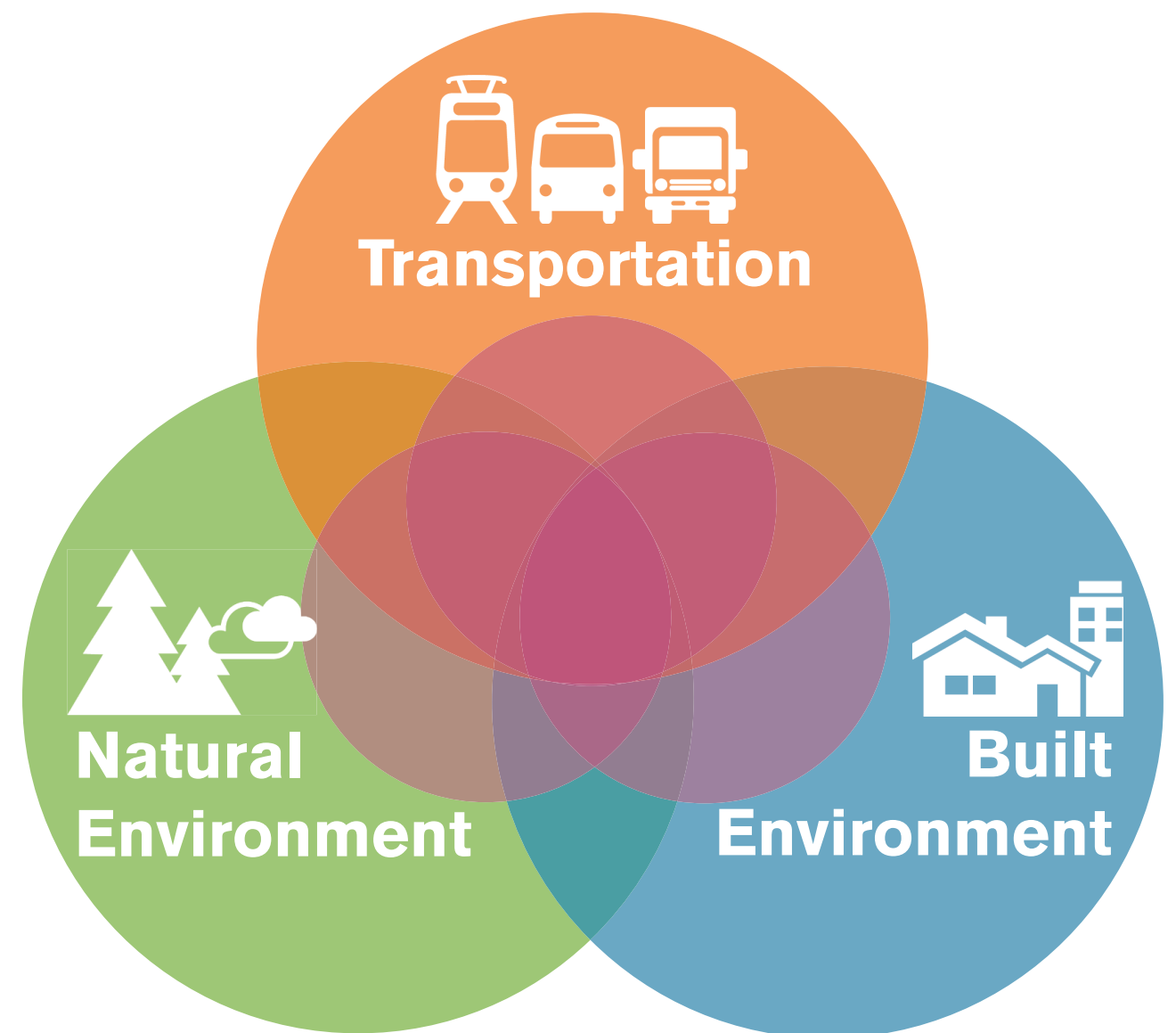
The **Draft EIS comment period**, anticipated in 2025, seeks feedback on:

- Potential environmental impacts and benefits of each alternative
- Proposed actions that will help mitigate impacts

Environmental Justice in the EIS

In an Environmental Impact Statement, the Environmental Justice chapter:

- ✓ Describes demographics
- ✓ Evaluates whether project disproportionately impacts low-income and communities of color
- ✓ Considers potential project benefits such as improved access to opportunity
- ✓ Documents what we hear from outreach efforts



There's an environmental justice focus within each area of the EIS

Comment here!

Share your NEPA scoping comments with a court reporter tonight!



What's a helpful comment during the scoping period?

1

Feedback related to the project Purpose and Need

2

Feedback related to the alternatives to be studied in the EIS

3

Feedback related to potential topics to study in the EIS

You can also provide scoping comments before Dec. 9 by:



Filling out a comment card



Commenting online: soundtransit.org/ballardlink-design



Emailing us: blescoping@soundtransit.org



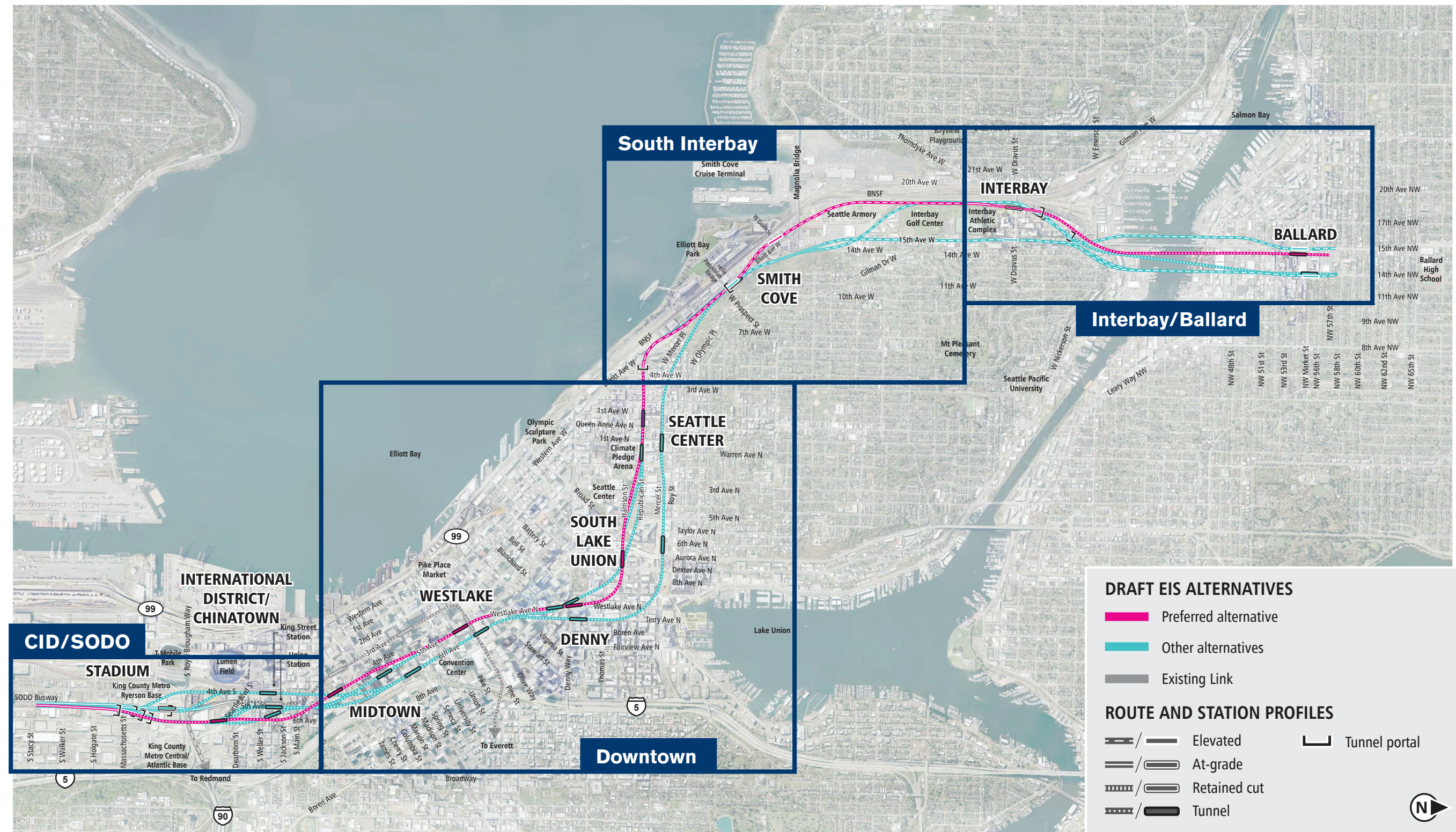
Leaving a voicemail: 206-903-7223



**Mailing us: Ballard Link Extension
c/o Lauren Swift
Sound Transit, 401 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104**

Ballard Link Extension route and station alternatives

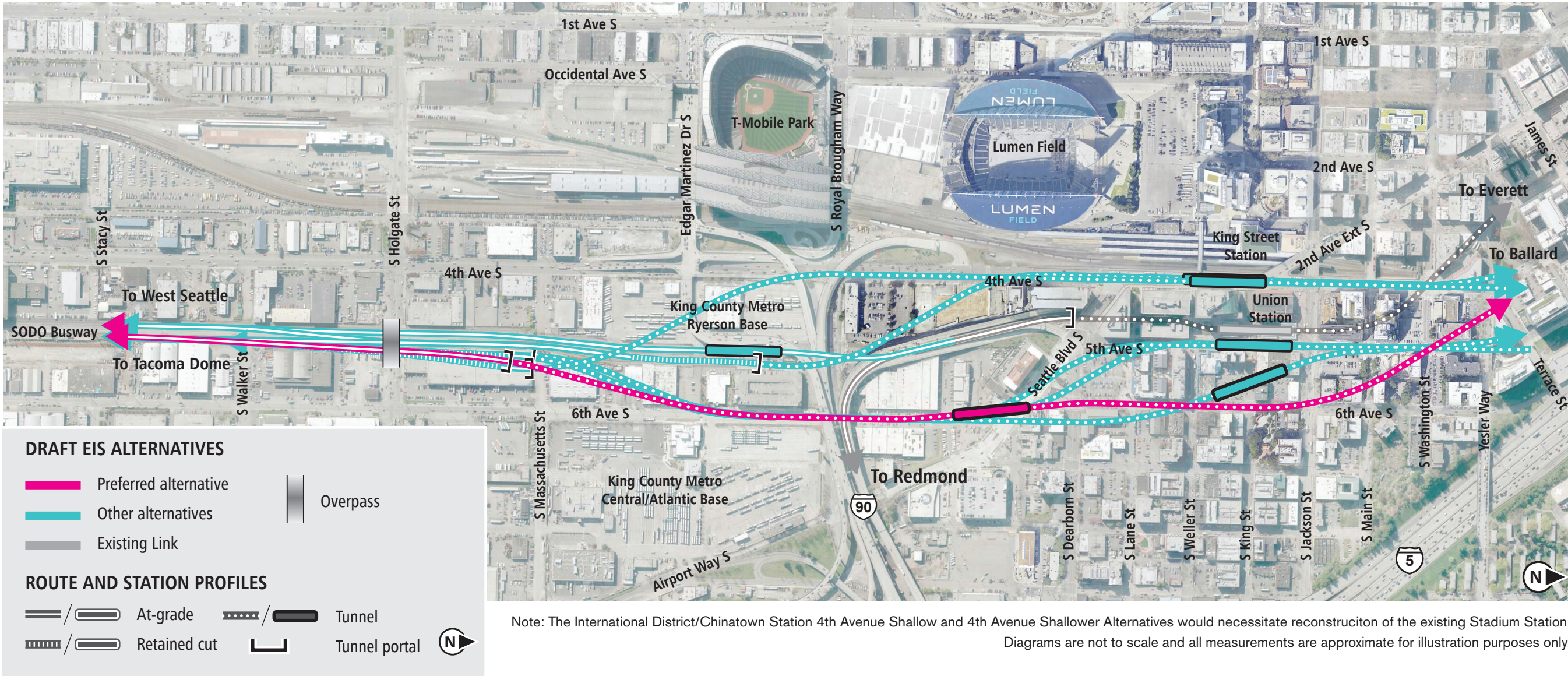
Your feedback helped get us here!



Diagrams are not to scale and all measurements are approximate for illustration purposes only.

Ballard Link Extension alternatives in CID/SODO

Your feedback helped get us here!



Ballard Link Extension alternatives in Downtown

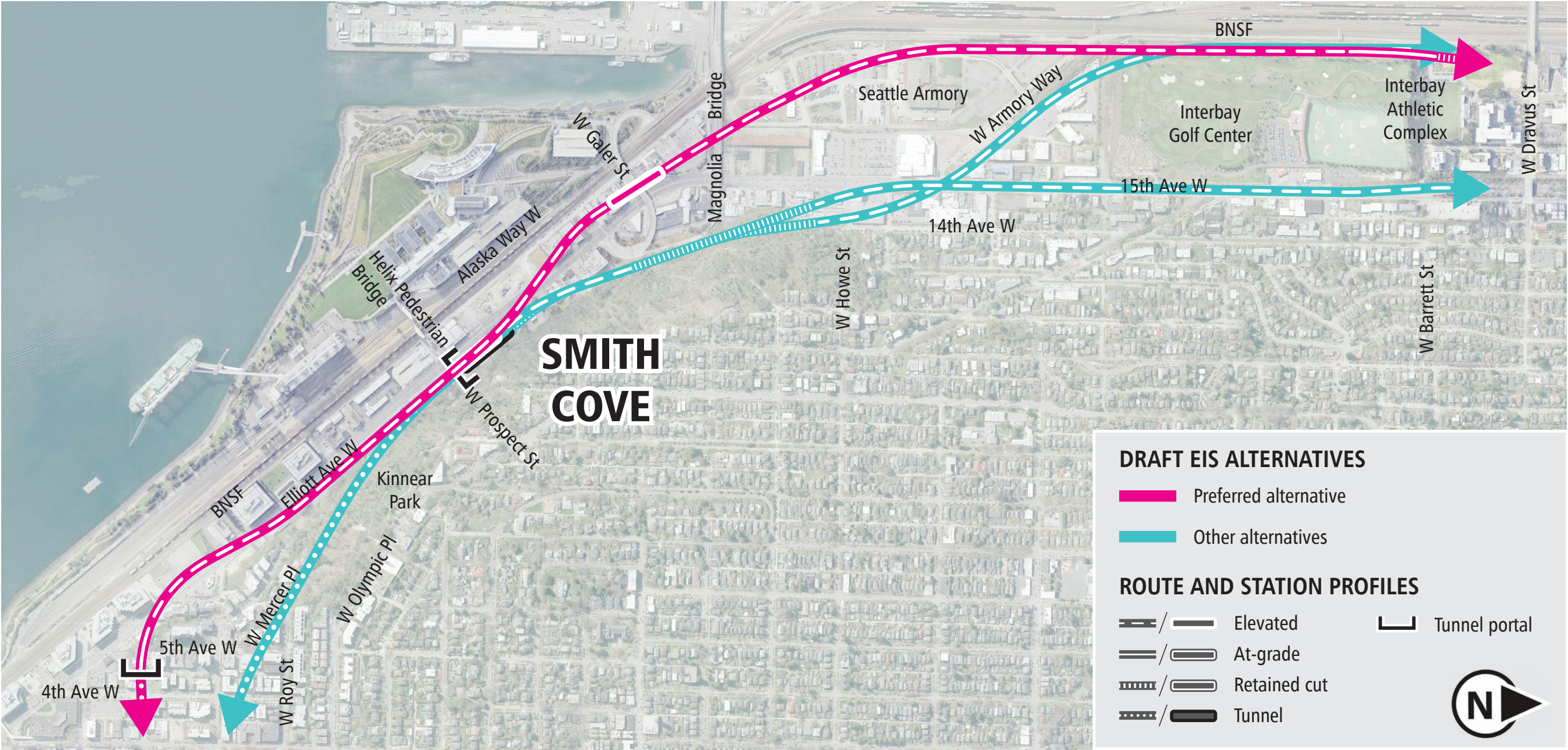
Your feedback helped get us here!



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Ballard Link Extension alternatives in South Interbay

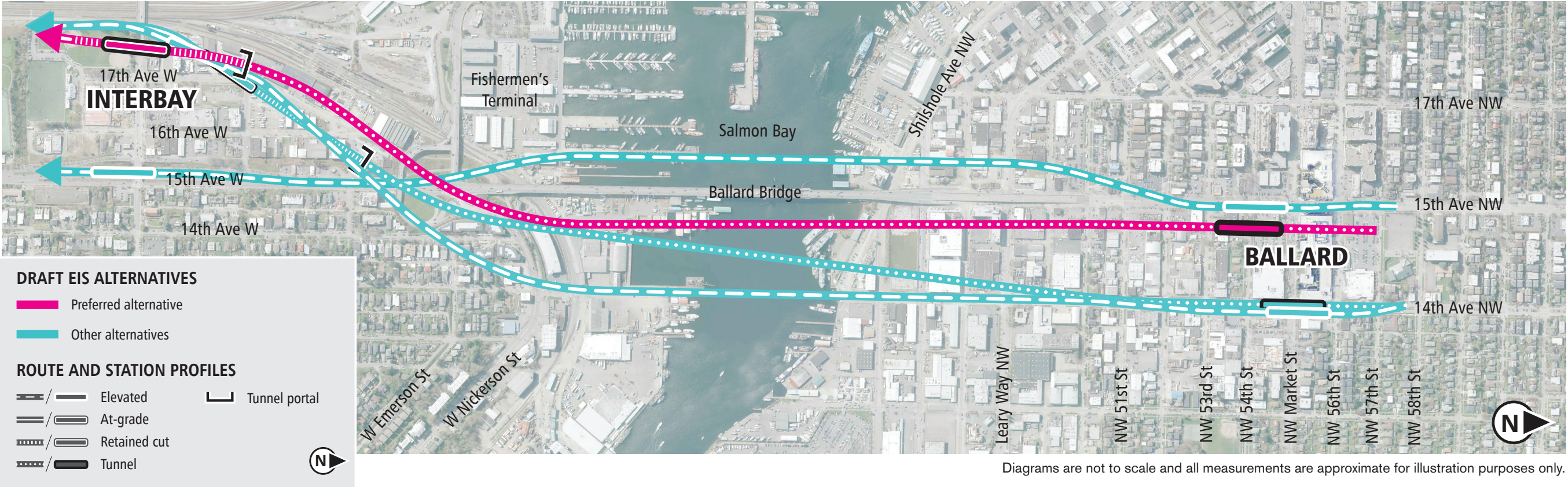
Your feedback helped get us here!



Diagrams are not to scale and all measurements are approximate for illustration purposes only.

Ballard Link Extension alternatives in Interbay/Ballard

Your feedback helped get us here!



Tonight's event

- **Learn:** *visit informational materials, ask staff questions*
- **Share:** *leave a scoping comment on:*
 - *Latest route and station alternatives*
 - *Topics to study in the Environmental Impact Statement*
 - *Project Purpose and Need*



Project Overview



Voter-approved system

Link light rail 1 2 3 4 T

- Five lines
- 116 miles
- 83 stations

Sounder trains N S

- Two lines
- 91 miles
- 14 stations

Stride bus rapid transit S1 S2 S3

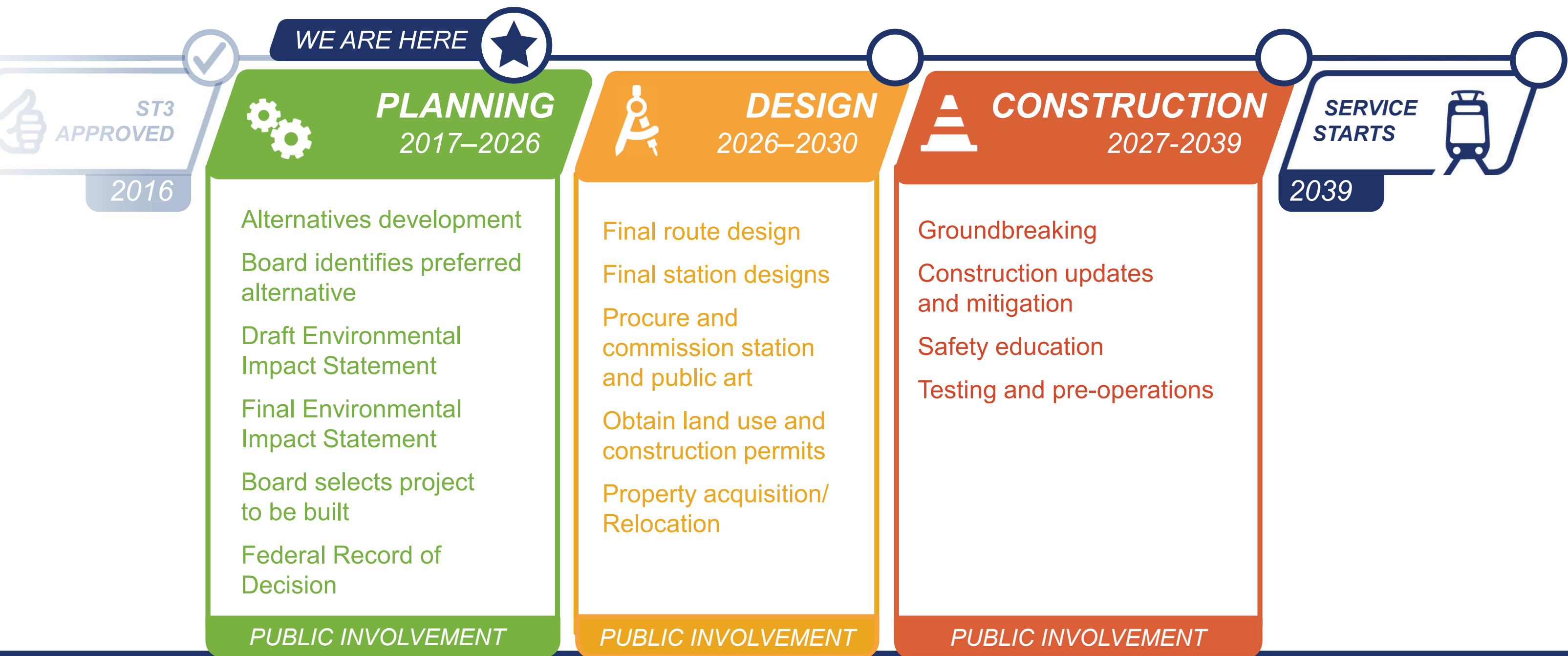
- Three lines
- 45 miles on I-405 and SR 522
- Serving 12 cities and connecting to light rail in Shoreline, Lynnwood, Bellevue, and Tukwila



Ballard Link Extension

- ✓ Included in Sound Transit 3 (ST3) voter approved plan.
- ✓ Adds nearly eight miles of light rail service, including a new light rail-only downtown tunnel.
- ✓ Includes nine new stations from Chinatown-International District to Ballard.

Ballard Link Extension project timeline



Planning phase

Alternatives development

- **2018:** Early scoping
- **2018-2019:** Neighborhood forums, Stakeholder Advisory Group, Elected Leadership Group
- **2019:** Scoping and public comment period
- **2019:** Board identifies preferred alternatives and other alternatives to study in an environmental impact statement (EIS)

2018: Stakeholder Advisory Group meetings



2019: Scoping meetings



2019-2020: Station planning neighborhood forums

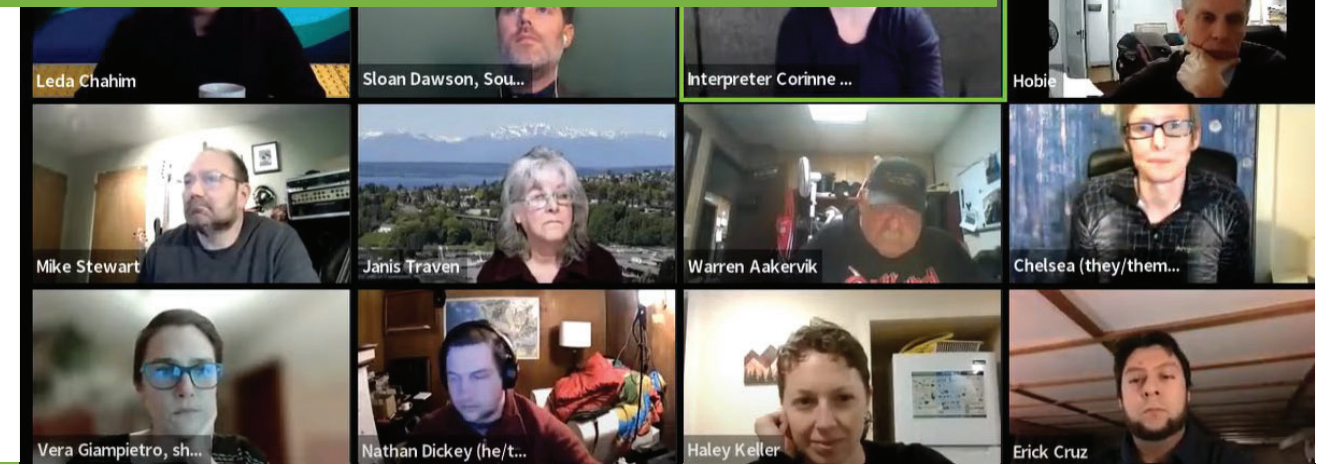


Planning phase

Environmental review

- **2022:** Publish West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions Draft EIS and public comment period
- **2022-2023:** Further studies and community engagement
- **2023:** Board confirms or modifies preferred alternatives for the BLE project

2021-2022: Community advisory groups



2022: Draft EIS open house



2022-2023: Further studies open houses and workshops



Why we are scoping (again)?

Next year, Sound Transit will publish a new BLE Draft EIS that builds upon the 2022 WSBLE Draft EIS with analysis of new alternatives and project refinements.

The first stage in this process is a scoping comment period to collect your feedback. However, we are not starting over.

We have been collecting public input on the project since planning began in 2017, and all past comments will be carried forward in the new BLE Draft EIS.



ST3

APPROVED

2016



PLANNING

2017–2023

Alternatives development

✓

2018: Early scoping

✓

2019: Scoping

✓

2019: Board identifies preferred alternatives and other alternatives

Environmental review

✓

2022: Publish WSBLE Draft EIS

✓

2023: Board confirms or modifies preferred alternatives

2024–2026

Environmental review

★

Fall 2024: NEPA Scoping

2025: Publish BLE Draft EIS

Public comment period

Board confirms or modifies preferred alternatives

2026: Publish BLE Final EIS

Board selects project to be built

Federal Record of Decision

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



DES

Environmental review process

So, what's an Environmental Impact Statement?

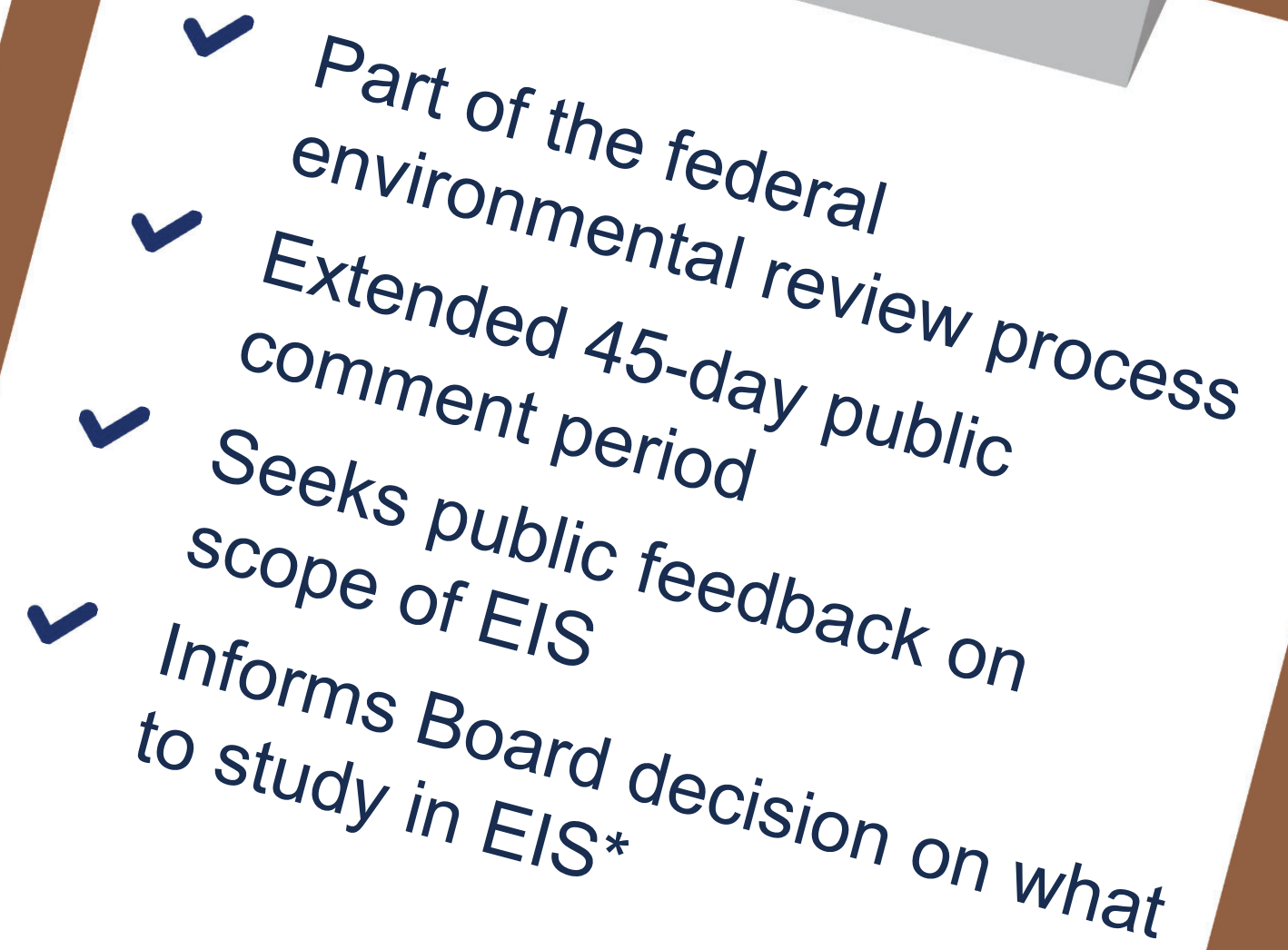
Or, “EIS” for short.

Provides agencies and the public an understanding of environmental consequences and assists in decision-making.

- 
- ✓ Starts with scoping
 - ✓ Range of alternatives
 - ✓ Potential impacts
 - ✓ Potential mitigation

What is scoping?

The EIS scoping period is an opportunity for the public, Tribes and agencies to provide input on the scope of the EIS, including the project's purpose and need, topics or issues to study in the EIS, and light rail route alternatives.

- 
- ✓ Part of the federal environmental review process
 - ✓ Extended 45-day public comment period
 - ✓ Seeks public feedback on scope of EIS
 - ✓ Informs Board decision on what to study in EIS*

What is typically studied in an EIS?

How a project affects...



What is typically studied in an EIS?

Transportation

- Regional transportation
- Transit services
- Arterial and local street systems
- Parking
- Non-motorized facilities
- Navigation
- Freight

Natural environment

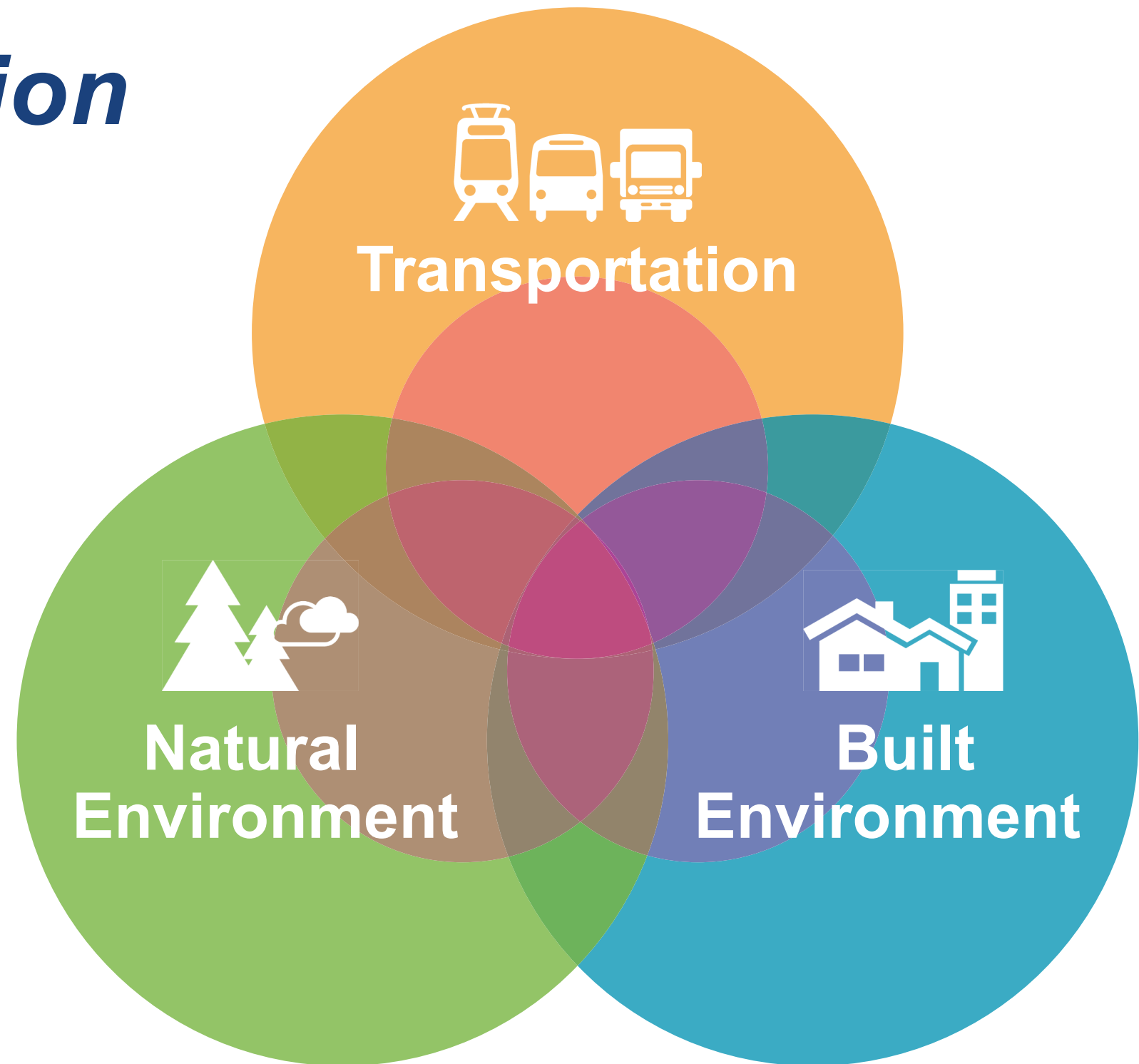
- Air quality and greenhouse gas emissions
- Ecosystems
- Water resources
- Geology and soils

Built environment

- Acquisitions, displacements and relocations
- Noise and vibration
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- Land use
- Energy
- Hazardous materials
- Public services
- Historic and archaeological resources
- Social resources, community facilities and neighborhoods
- Electromagnetic fields
- Utilities

Equity and inclusion

***Environmental justice
focus within each
area of the EIS***



EIS studies:

Environmental justice

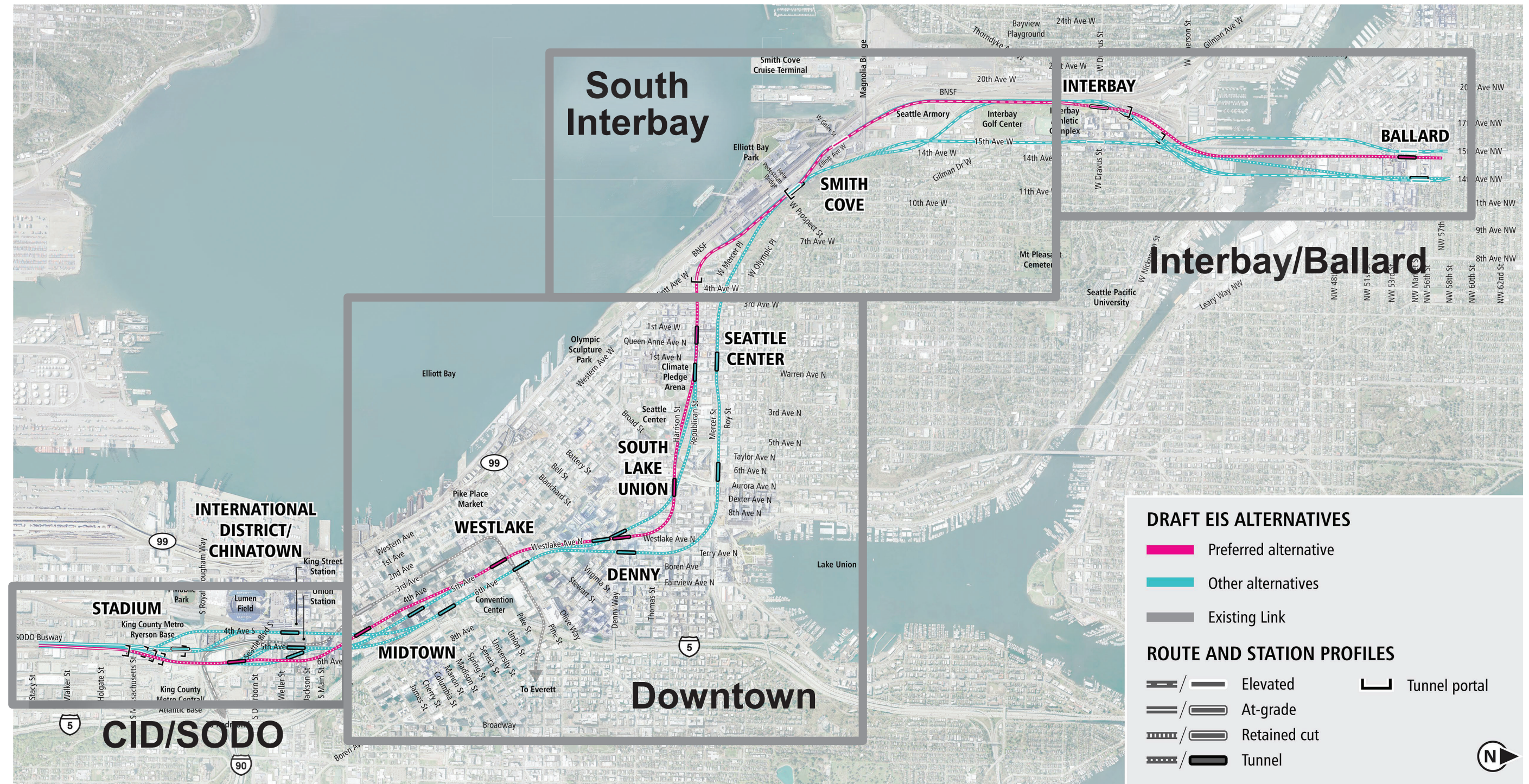
- ✓ Describes demographics
- ✓ Evaluates whether project disproportionately impacts low-income and communities of color
- ✓ Considers potential project benefits such as improved access to opportunity
- ✓ Documents what we hear from outreach efforts

Ballard Link Extension alternatives

- Preferred alternative
- Other EIS alternatives



Draft EIS alternatives - BLE



Next Steps

Tonight's event

- **Learn:** *visit informational materials, ask staff questions*
- **Share:** *leave a scoping comment on:*
 - *Latest route and station alternatives*
 - *Topics to study in the Environmental Impact Statement*
 - *Project Purpose and Need*



How to provide scoping comments

- ***Comment online:*** soundtransit.org/ballardlink-design
- ***Email us:*** blescoping@soundtransit.org
- ***Leave a voicemail:*** 206-903-7223
- ***Mail us:*** Ballard Link Extension, c/o Lauren Swift,
Sound Transit, 401 S. Jackson St., Seattle,
WA 98104
- ***Join us at our second scoping meeting:***
Nov. 13, 5 – 7 p.m.
National Nordic Museum, 2655 NW Market St., Seattle WA 98107

Contact us:

ballardlink@soundtransit.org

blescoping@soundtransit.org

206-903-7223



Visit our online open house to learn more about the BLE project and route and station options.

soundtransit.org/ballardlink-design



傳譯員 Interpreter

800-823-9230

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Tagalog русский язык Tiếng Việt

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