Ballard Link Extension

Project Update

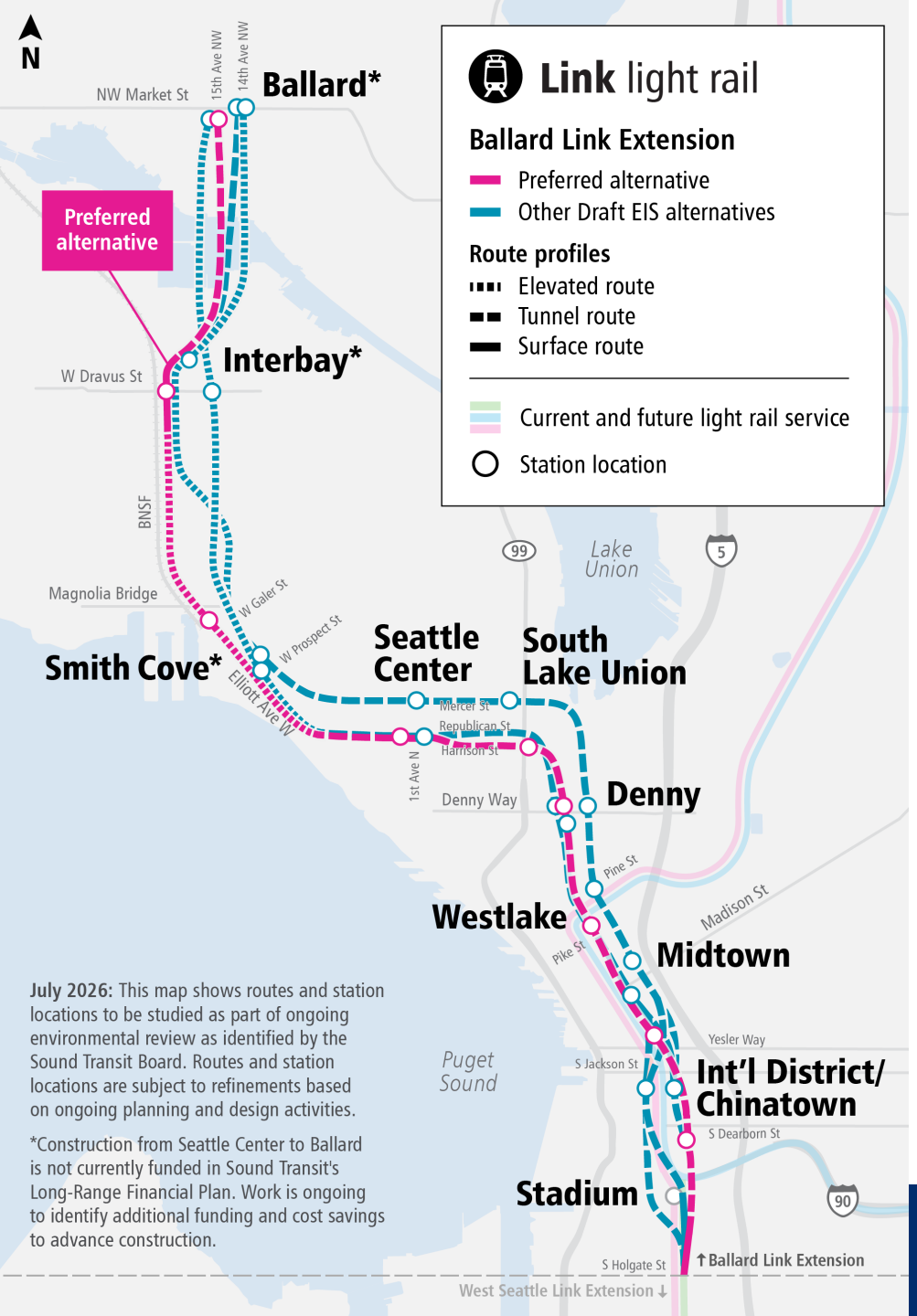
System Expansion Committee
11/12/2026

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Why we are here

Providing updates on **key project developments** and **upcoming activities**:

- Draft EIS and project schedule
- Cost Savings Workplan
- Request for Information (RFI) and Engineering & Design Services (EDS) procurement

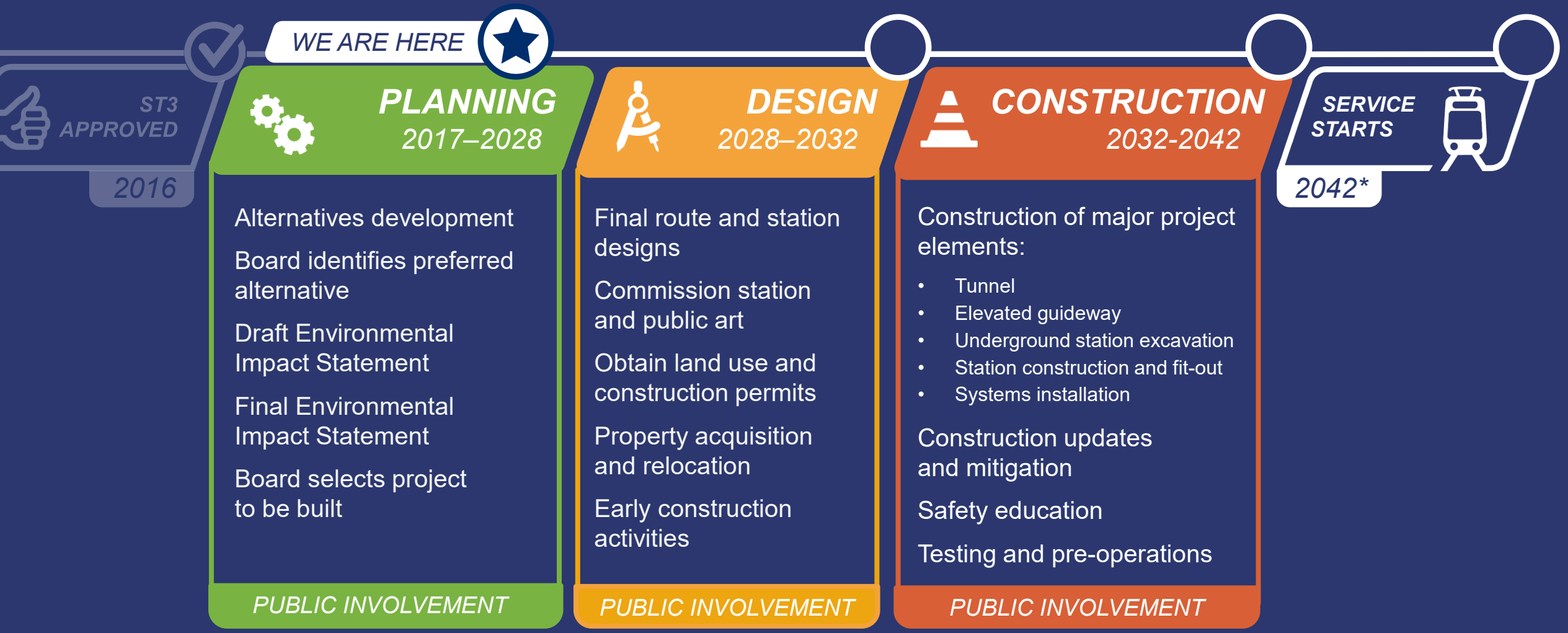


Ballard Link Extension

- Included in Sound Transit 3 (ST3) voter-approved plan.
- Adds up to nearly **eight miles of light rail service**, including a new light rail-only downtown tunnel.
- Includes up to **nine new stations** from Chinatown-International District to Ballard.
- Improves regional mobility by **increasing connectivity and capacity** through Downtown Seattle to meet the projected transit demand.
- Provides high-capacity transit stations and **increased options for multi-modal access** necessary for increased residential and/or employment density.

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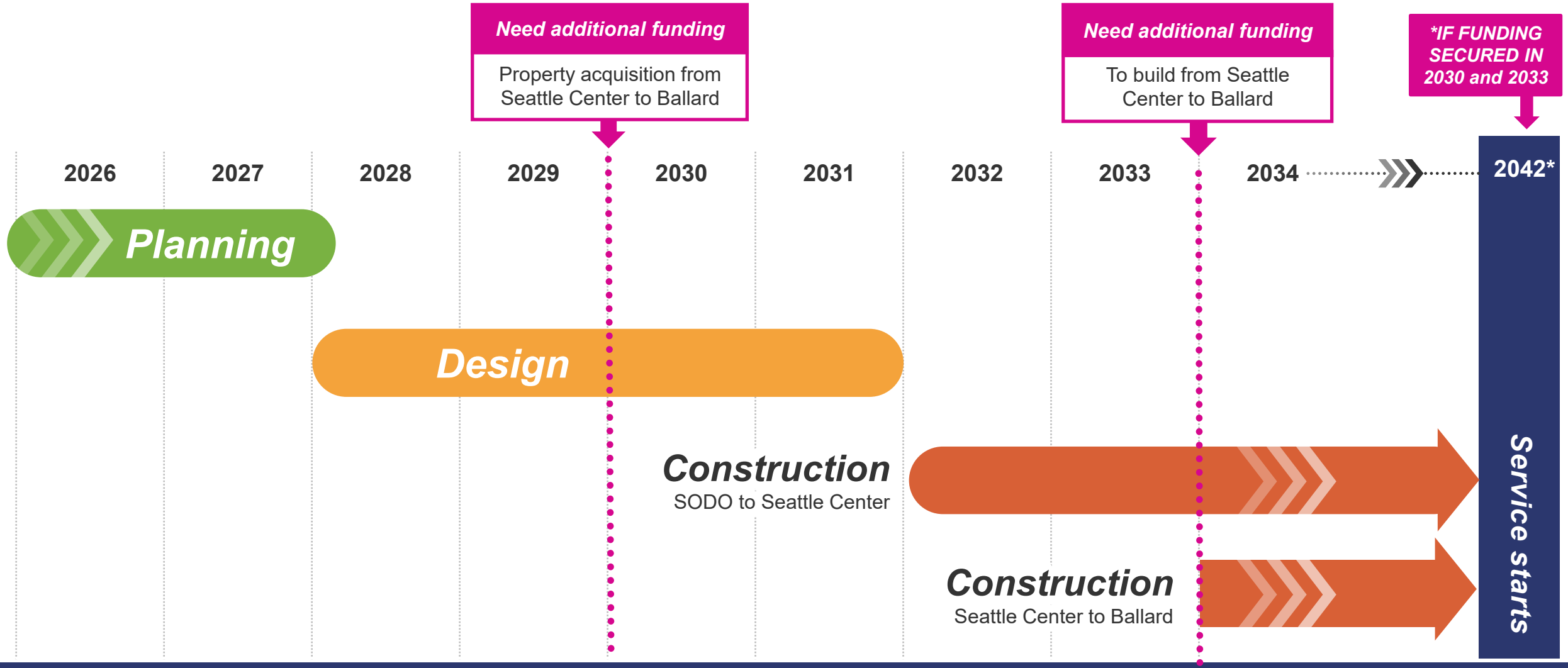
Ballard Link Extension project timeline



**Service from SODO to Seattle Center Station is scheduled to open in 2042. Construction from Seattle Center to Ballard is currently not affordable but could open at the same time if Sound Transit can further reduce project costs, increase financial capacity, and secure the remaining construction funding.*

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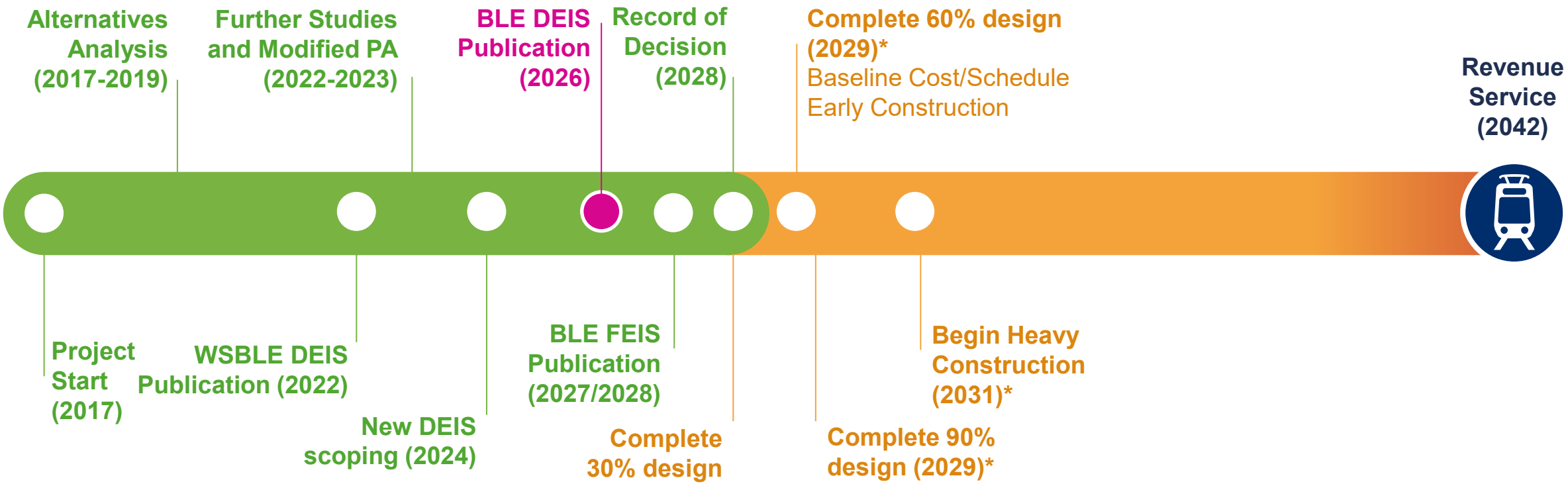
How to get to Ballard by 2042



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Draft EIS Update

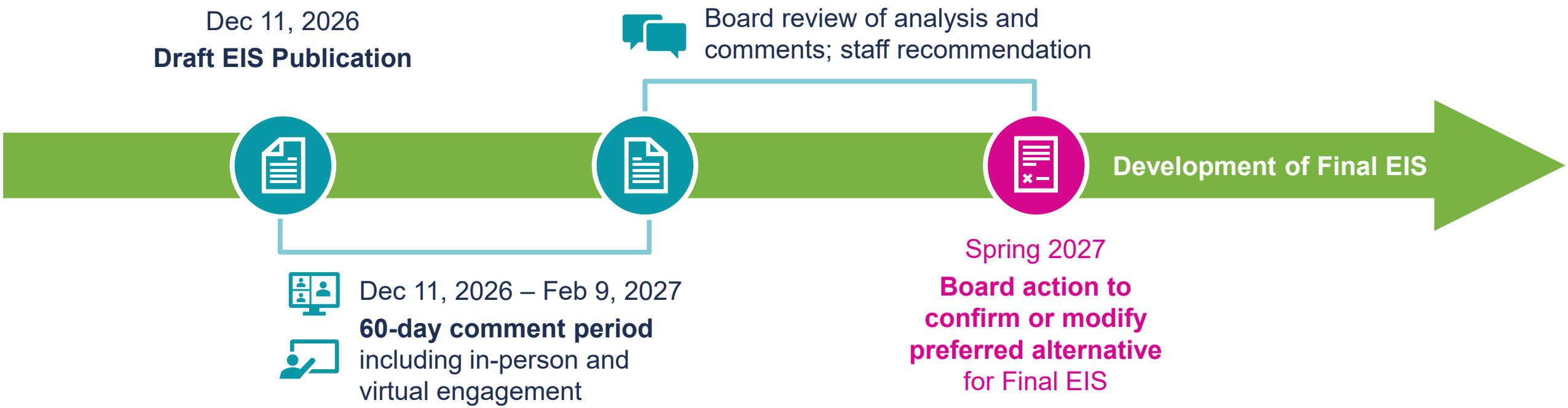
Project Timeline and Draft EIS



**Design and construction dates for SODO to Seattle Center*

All future dates are estimated. FEIS and ROD schedule may change depending on schedule coordination with FTA and required consultation processes under other federal laws.

Draft EIS Schedule



Upcoming DEIS Engagement Activities

- **4 public hearings** (includes open house, presentation, and public comment)
- **5 virtual webinars** for potentially affected property owners and tenants
- **Near-project mailers** for 127,842 physical addresses
- **Briefings** for stakeholders and community groups
- **Small group meetings** and comment writing workshops in the CID
- **Tabling throughout project area**, including farmers markets, high-traffic areas, festivals, and Lunar New Year events

DEIS Public Hearings:

- **Hearing 1** – January 6
  4 – 6:30 p.m. (Chinatown-International District)
- **Hearing 2** – January 12
  5 – 7:30 p.m. (Ballard)
- **Hearing 3** – January 19
  5 – 7 p.m. (South Lake Union)
- **Hearing 4** – January 26
  5 – 6:30 p.m. (Virtual)

Pursuing design efficiencies and cost savings

Driving optimization and cost savings

Past:

Cost savings workplan

- Created an opportunity register with hundreds of potential cost-saving measures
- Identified up to $4B in cost savings during the Enterprise Initiative process



What we're doing now:

Design advancement

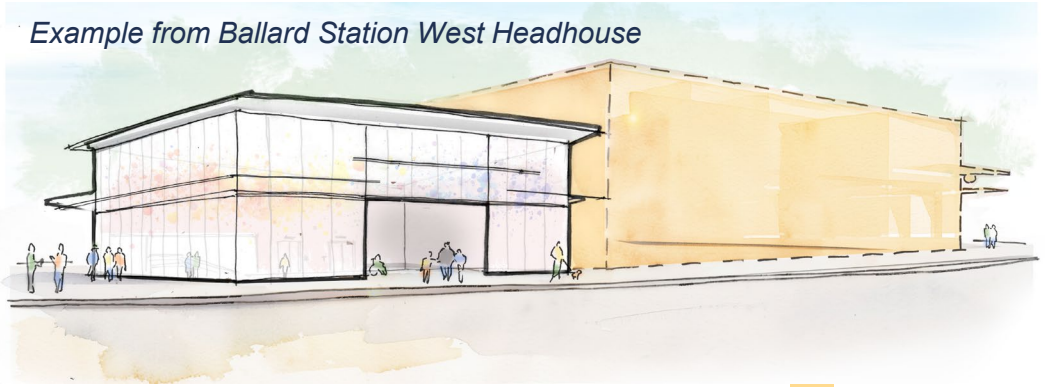
- Publishing the BLE Draft EIS
- Targeting a range of cost saving opportunities in design
- Streamlining permitting and other early schedule drivers to optimize the project schedule
- Reviewing innovative ideas received in response to Request for Information (RFI)
- Early procurement of an Engineering & Design Consultant



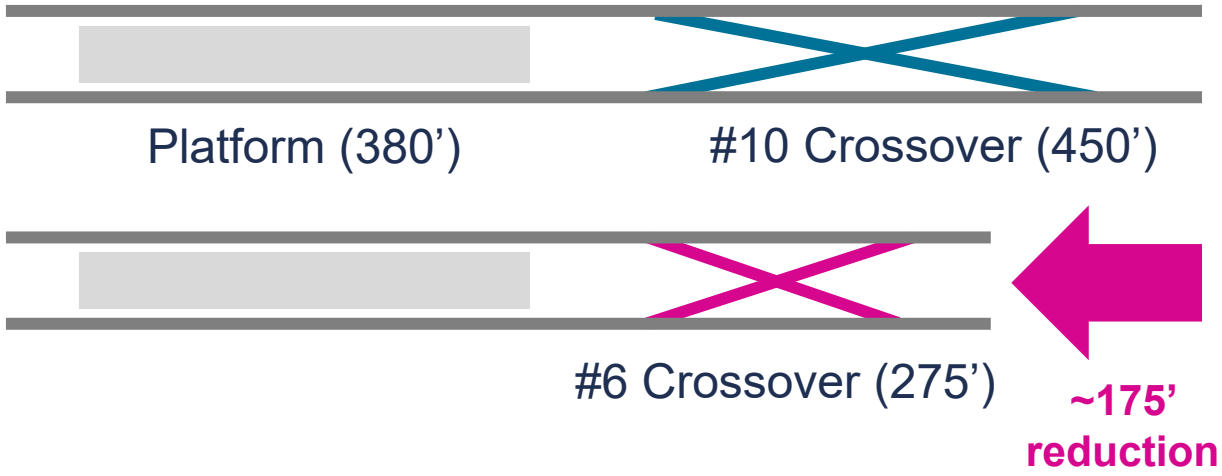
2025: Cost Savings Already Incorporated

Right-sizing station boxes, headhouses & track crossovers; consolidating & optimizing ventilation fan plant configurations; efficient construction approaches that combine temporary & permanent works.

Example #1: Station size & configuration



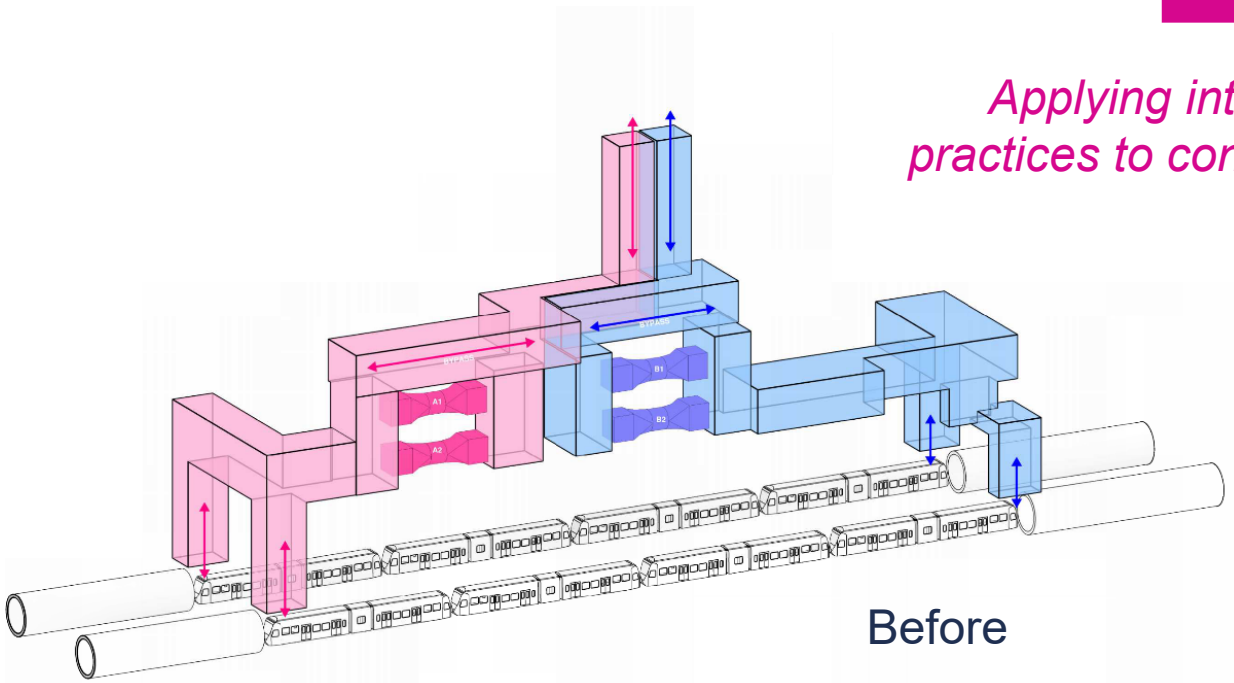
Example #2: Track crossover lengths



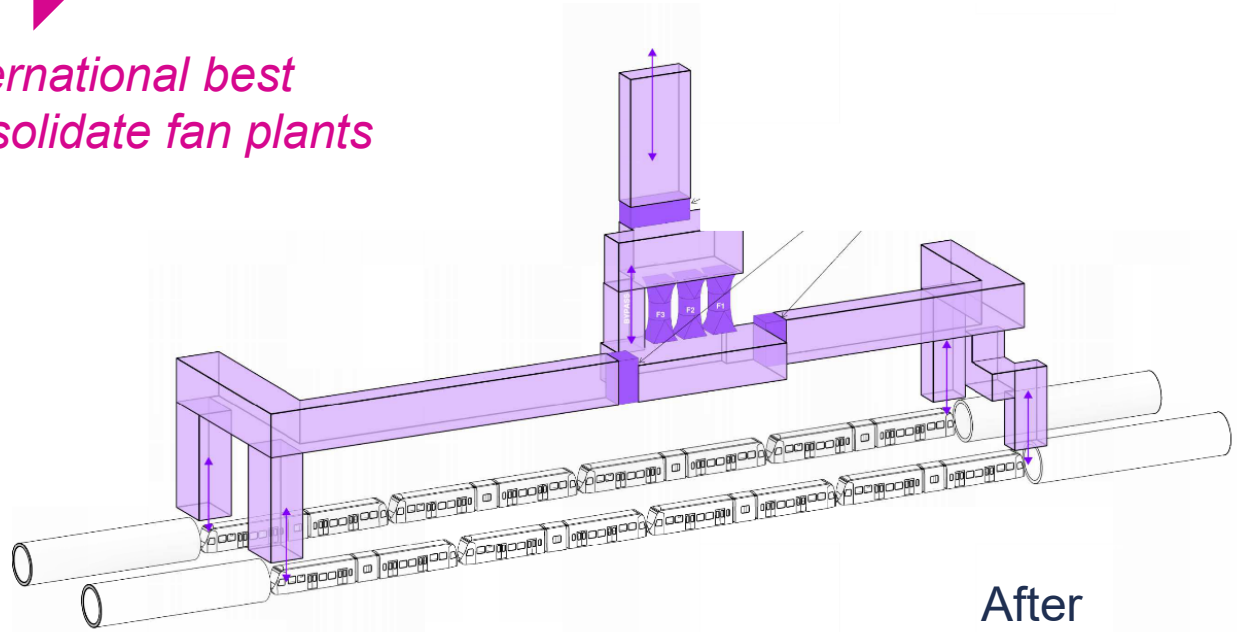
2025: Cost Savings Being Designed

Example #3: Optimized ventilation approach

Applying international best practices to consolidate fan plants



Before



After

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Peer agency coordination

- Engaging agencies and contractors around the world, including the **United States, Canada, Europe, Australia and Asia.**
- Learning and exchanging best practices and lessons in **design efficiency**, **passenger-focused** design, **innovation**, and **policy.**


Efficient design; Copenhagen, DK


Compact headhouse; Los Angeles, CA


Public art integration; Vancouver, BC

Peer Agency Examples


Combined elements; Montreal, QC



Minimalist wayfinding/design; London, UK

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Seeking innovative ideas from industry

- Issued a **Request for Information (RFI)** to solicit innovative ideas and strategies to accelerate delivery of BLE
- Viable concepts will be evaluated with the Engineering & Design Services consultant beginning in spring 2027 and may inform broad broader systemwide opportunities
- Staff will provide periodic updates to the Board on promising opportunities for cost and schedule savings

RFI Response Themes

- Delivery models & early contractor involvement
- Environmental & permitting
- Construction & tunneling methods
- Train control & transit mode
- Funding, financing & value capture
- Digital tools & project controls
- Station & civil design optimization
- Property, utilities & third parties

Engineering & Design Services

- **Engineering & Design Services (EDS) Consultant** in procurement
  - Request for Qualifications issued October 15, contract award expected in spring 2027
- **Initial phase** of work includes:
  - Evaluating cost savings concepts and identify further opportunities
  - **Goal of bringing more project scope into affordable finance plan**

Next Steps

Next steps: complete planning phase

- Complete **Engineering & Design Services (EDS) procurement** and select consultant team in spring 2027
- **Evaluate Request for Information (RFI) responses** and advance promising ideas with EDS consultant
- Complete the **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process**

Thank you

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