



# Scoping Information Report

**April 2019**

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

Board	Sound Transit Board
BPA	Bonneville Power Administration
EIS	environmental impact statement
ET	East Tacoma
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
HCT	high-capacity transit
I-5	Interstate 5
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
OMF South	Operations and Maintenance Facility South
PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council
Puyallup Tribe	Puyallup Tribe of Indians
ROD	Record of Decision
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
Sound Transit	Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority
SF	South Federal Way
SR 99	State Route 99
SR 167	State Route 167
ST2	Sound Transit 2
ST3	Sound Transit 3
TD	Tacoma Dome
TDLE	Tacoma Dome Link Extension
TOD	transit oriented development



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## Invitation to Comment and Notice for the Tacoma Dome Link Extension Scoping Period: April 1 to May 1, 2019

The Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (Sound Transit) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are conducting scoping activities for an environmental impact statement (EIS) they will prepare for the Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) Project. This project is part of the Sound Transit 3 (ST3) Plan approved by voters in 2016. The project would extend the regional light rail system nearly 10 miles, from the Federal Way Transit Center Station in the city of Federal Way, King County, to the Tacoma Dome Station area in the city of Tacoma, Pierce County. It includes four new stations and a bridge crossing the Puyallup River. **Exhibit 1** shows the location of the TDLE project and potential alternatives being considered during scoping as Sound Transit works to identify which alternatives to evaluate in the Draft EIS. TDLE is a regional capacity project listed as part of The Regional Transportation Plan—2018 (PSRC 2018) prepared by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and Sound Transit's Regional Transit Long-Range Plan adopted on December 18, 2014 (Sound Transit 2014a). **Exhibit 2** shows Sound Transit's regional transit system, including TDLE and other projects that are part of the system expansion.

This scoping information report describes the:

- Scoping process
- TDLE project
- Draft Purpose and Need
- Potential EIS alternatives
- Topics to be addressed in the EIS
- Next steps

### What is scoping?

Scoping begins the public conversation shaping the project at the start of the formal state and federal environmental processes. FTA and Sound Transit are inviting the public, other agencies and tribal governments to take part in defining the alternatives for the Tacoma Dome Link Extension project and determining how it can best fit in with the communities and the environment.

Sound Transit is inviting all interested parties to be involved in decisions about this project. To learn more or get involved, interested parties can attend a scoping meeting, visit the online open house, or submit written comments according to the procedures outlined in Section 2 of this report.





Exhibit 2 Regional System Map

## 2 THE SCOPING PROCESS

Scoping provides an opportunity for the public to learn about and provide comments on the project as it begins, including the Draft Purpose and Need, potential alternatives, and environmental resources to evaluate in the EIS. Scoping supports the project's overall planning, public involvement, and state and federal environmental approach.

FTA and Sound Transit have concluded that the project has the potential to result in significant environmental effects and an EIS is needed, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Washington's State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Various alternatives to develop light rail in the corridor are being considered for evaluation in the EIS. The light rail alternatives are based on the potential alternatives identified through an alternatives evaluation process that includes input from agencies, tribes, and the public. More information on alternatives is in Section 5.

A scoping notice for the EIS has been published in the Federal Register and the SEPA register. Notices and project informational display advertisements announcing upcoming public scoping meetings are in the following publications:

- El Siete Dias
- Federal Way Mirror
- International Examiner
- Korea Daily
- Korean Times Seattle
- Northwest Military
- Northwest Vietnamese News
- Seattle Times
- South Sound Biz
- Tacoma News Tribune
- Tacoma Weekly
- Tu Decides
- Weekly Volcano

Notices and information are posted on the project website and Sound Transit's social media platforms, and were also sent out via email updates to the project's GovDelivery list serve. Additionally, open house posters will be distributed to local businesses and community organizations along the project corridor.

FTA and Sound Transit invite the public, agencies, and tribes to be involved in the EIS process. During the EIS scoping process, comments are encouraged on the Draft Purpose and Need, the range of potential alternatives, and environmental issues of concern.

FTA and Sound Transit are inviting over 30 federal, state, regional, and local agencies to be involved in the EIS process. A complete list of the agencies with jurisdiction, special expertise, or

interest that are invited to take part in the EIS process as cooperating or participating agencies is provided in the project's Coordination Plan, available on the project website at: [www.soundtransit.org/tdlink](http://www.soundtransit.org/tdlink).

FTA has initiated government-to-government consultation for the TDLE project with the Puyallup Tribe of Indians (Puyallup Tribe), Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, and Nisqually Indian Tribe.

### **Public Comment Period and Community Meetings**

The comment period for scoping extends from April 1 to May 1, 2019. During this period, three community open houses (public meetings) to inform and obtain input from the public will be held at:

- **Fife Community Center**  
Tuesday, April 16, 2019, 6:00–8:00 p.m.  
2111 54th Avenue E, Fife, WA 98424
- **Tacoma Convention Center, Rooms 315 and 317**  
Wednesday, April 17, 2019, 6:00–8:00 p.m.  
1500 Commerce Street, Tacoma, WA 98402
- **Federal Way Performing Arts and Event Center**  
Tuesday, April 23, 2019, 6:00–8:00 p.m.  
31510 Pete von Reichbauer Way S, Federal Way, WA 98003

All public meeting locations are accessible to persons with disabilities. Alternative formats are available by contacting:

- Alternative formats: 1-800-201-4900
- Persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired: TTY Relay 711
- Email: [accessibility@soundtransit.org](mailto:accessibility@soundtransit.org)

In addition to the community meetings, a scoping meeting will be held for representatives from tribes, agencies, and cities.

### **How to Comment**

During the scoping process, comments can be provided in the following ways:

- Community Open Houses: Written comment forms will be provided, and computers will be available to access the online comment form
- Online: [tdlink.participate.online](http://tdlink.participate.online)
- Email: [TDLEscoping@soundtransit.org](mailto:TDLEscoping@soundtransit.org)
- Mail: Sound Transit, TDLE Project  
c/o Elma Borbe, Senior Environmental Planner  
401 S Jackson Street, Seattle, WA 98104
- Project Phone Line: 206-903-7118

## How Comments Will be Used

After the end of the comment period on May 1, 2019, Sound Transit will collect, review, and summarize the comments received and prepare a scoping summary report to share the results of the scoping process. The report will be publicly available.

The comments received during the scoping period will be considered by FTA and Sound Transit to define the scope of the EIS and inform the related technical analyses and environmental resources to be evaluated.

In collaboration with FTA, the Sound Transit Board (Board) is expected to confirm the Draft Purpose and Need for the project, and identify the alternatives to be evaluated in the Draft EIS, including a Preferred Alternative in summer 2019.

## 3 THE TACOMA DOME LINK EXTENSION PROJECT AND THE REGIONAL SYSTEM

The TDLE project is an approximately 10-mile light rail line with four stations connecting from the Federal Way Transit Center to the Tacoma Dome Station. The light rail line would be primarily elevated. Stations would be at South Federal Way, Fife, East Tacoma, and the Tacoma Dome, with park-and-ride facilities planned in South Federal Way and Fife. The Tacoma Dome Station would serve as a multimodal transit hub, with transfer options to and from Sounder service, Amtrak, Tacoma Link, Greyhound, and Pierce Transit and Sound Transit buses.

### Sound Transit and the Region's Mass Transit System

Sound Transit was created to build a mass transit system connecting the urban centers of King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. In 1996, voters approved Sound Move, the first phase of investment in the mass transit system, which includes regional express buses, commuter rail, and light rail. Sound Transit began operating the first phase of the Central Link light rail system with the line from downtown Seattle south to SeaTac in 2009.

When voters approved the Sound Transit 2 (ST2) Plan in 2008, the second phase of investment in the region's mass transit system began. The plan added regional express bus and commuter rail service while building 36 additional miles of light rail to form a 55-mile regional system. The ST2 Plan extends light rail south to Federal Way, east to Bellevue, and north to Lynnwood.

Voters approved the third phase of investment, the ST3 Plan, in 2016. In addition to bus and commuter rail service expansion, the ST3 Plan adds 62 new miles of light rail for a regional system reaching 116 miles. ST3 extends light rail from Federal Way to Tacoma, as well as to Everett, South Kirkland, Issaquah, Redmond, and the Seattle neighborhoods of West Seattle and Ballard.

**Exhibit 2** shows the regional transit system, including TDLE and other projects that are part of the system expansion.



## 4 DRAFT PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

As part of EIS scoping, FTA and Sound Transit are seeking comments on the Draft Purpose and Need, which will be finalized as preparation of the Draft EIS begins.

The Draft Purpose and Need statement establishes the basis for developing and evaluating a range of reasonable alternatives for environmental review and assists with identifying a Preferred Alternative. The purpose of the TDLE is to expand the Link light rail system from the Federal Way Transit Center to the Tacoma Dome Station area in order to:

- Provide high-quality rapid, reliable, and efficient light rail transit service to communities in the project corridor, as defined through the local planning process and reflected in the ST3 Plan (Sound Transit 2016).
- Improve regional mobility by increasing connectivity and capacity in the TDLE corridor from the Federal Way Transit Center to the Tacoma Dome Station area to meet projected transit demand.
- Connect communities of Federal Way, Milton, Fife, Tacoma, and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians to regional centers and destinations on the regional high-capacity transit (HCT) system as described in adopted regional and local land use, transportation, and economic development plans and Sound Transit's Regional Transit Long-Range Plan (Sound Transit 2014a).
- Implement a system that is technically and financially feasible to build, operate, and maintain.
- Expand mobility for the corridor and region's residents, which include transit dependent, low-income, and minority populations.
- Encourage equitable and sustainable urban growth in station areas through support of transit oriented development and multimodal integration in a manner that is consistent with local land use plans and policies, including Sound Transit's Transit Oriented Development and Sustainability policies.
- Encourage convenient and safe nonmotorized access to stations such as bicycle and pedestrian connections consistent with Sound Transit's System Access Policy.
- Preserve and promote a healthy environment and economy by minimizing adverse impacts on the natural, built, and social environments.

The project is needed because:

- Chronic roadway congestion on Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 99 (SR 99)—two primary highways connecting communities along the corridor—delays today's travelers, including those using transit, and degrades the reliability of bus service traversing the corridor, particularly during commute periods.
- These chronic, degraded conditions are expected to continue and worsen as the region's population and employment grows.

- Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), the regional metropolitan planning organization, and local plans call for HCT in the corridor consistent with VISION 2040 (PSRC 2009) and Sound Transit's Regional Transit Long-Range Plan (Sound Transit 2014a).
- South King and Pierce counties citizens and communities, including transit-dependent residents and low-income or minority populations, need long-term regional mobility and multimodal connectivity as called for in the Washington State Growth Management Act.
- Regional and local plans call for increased residential and/or employment density at and around HCT stations, and increased options for multimodal access.
- Environmental and sustainability goals of the state and region, as established in Washington state law and embodied in PSRC's VISION 2040 and 2018 Regional Transportation Plan, include reducing greenhouse gas emissions by decreasing vehicle miles traveled.

## 5 POTENTIAL EIS ALTERNATIVES

### How Alternatives Were Developed

The alternatives development process for the TDLE project began with early scoping in 2018, and was focused on the representative project that was in the ST3 Plan submitted to and approved by voters in 2016. The representative project reflects several years of prior studies and agency and public involvement, and formed the basis for the project's scope, schedule, and budget in the ST3 Plan.

The representative project's key features included approximately 9.7 miles of dedicated, mostly elevated guideway to extend light rail from the Federal Way Transit Center to the Tacoma Dome Station area, generally following I-5. It featured four stations located in South Federal Way, Fife, East Tacoma, and the Tacoma Dome, with 500-space park-and-ride facilities planned in South Federal Way and Fife. It also featured a light rail bridge crossing the Puyallup River.

Following early scoping, Sound Transit conducted two levels of alternatives evaluation involving advisory groups representing agencies, tribes, corridor stakeholders, and the public, as well as open houses and other public outreach. The TDLE's Pre-Screening and Level 1 Alternatives Report (Sound Transit 2019a) and Level 2 Alternatives Evaluation Report (Sound Transit 2019b) contain details about the alternatives analysis, including alternatives evaluated and the findings of the technical analysis, and are available on the project's website at: [www.soundtransit.org/tdlink](http://www.soundtransit.org/tdlink). The Level 2 Alternatives Evaluation Report also summarizes which alternatives are currently considered most promising, based on the

#### ADVISORY GROUPS

##### Elected Leadership Group

The Elected Leadership Group comprises elected officials and tribal representatives who represent the project corridor and the Board. The purpose of this group is to represent local jurisdictional perspectives in the planning process, strive for consensus around key decisions, and work through project issues. The group advises Sound Transit on alternatives moving forward and will recommend a Preferred Alternative to the Board.

##### Stakeholders Group

The Stakeholders Group includes community members, residents, and business groups along the corridor. They participate in the development and narrowing of alternatives.

##### Interagency Group

The Interagency Group is composed of senior staff from the tribes, agencies, and jurisdictions with permitting authority who can provide insight on technical decisions.



technical evaluations and feedback from the project’s advisory groups and the public. The project corridor encompassing the current range of alternatives is shown in **Exhibit 1**.

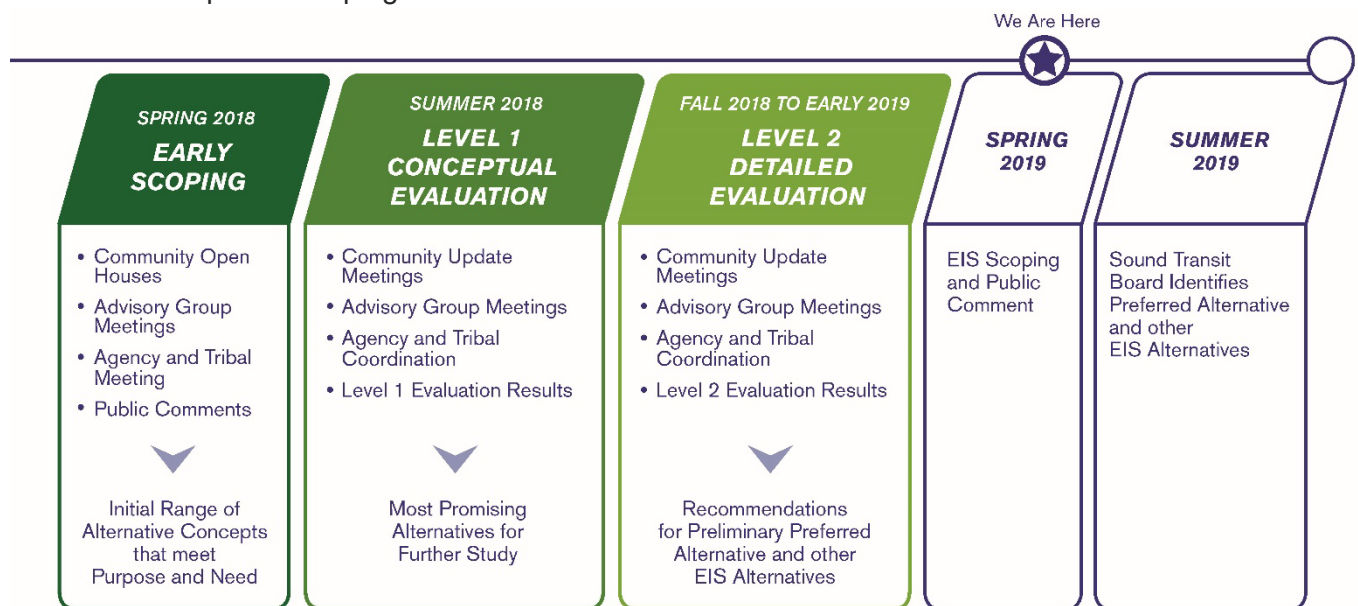
In a previous decision, the Board has adopted light rail transit as the mode to serve the south corridor connecting Seattle to Tacoma. In adopting light rail, the Board considered previous studies and public involvement completed for the adoption of the Regional Transit Long-Range Plan (Sound Transit 2014a) and its EIS, as well as the results of the Federal Way to Tacoma HCT Corridor Study (Sound Transit 2014b) and related ST3 planning and outreach. Therefore, only light rail transit alternatives are being considered for the TDLE.

### Early Scoping and Alternatives Evaluations

Sound Transit began developing and reviewing potential alternatives beginning with public early scoping under SEPA in April 2018 as shown in **Exhibit 3**. Early scoping involved agencies, tribes, and the public, and included three public open houses and one agency meeting. Early scoping comments were received from one tribal government and 11 agencies, and over 550 written comments were received from the public. The Early Scoping Summary Report contains further information about the comments received (Sound Transit 2018).

Sound Transit then worked with the advisory groups—the Elected Leadership Group, Stakeholders Group, and Interagency Group—to refine the representative project and consider public comments to create a range of other options that could meet the project’s Draft Purpose and Need. Over 50 alternatives and options were evaluated. Most of the alternatives were variations on alignments that followed either I-5, SR 99, or other local streets parallel to I-5, including options on both sides of I-5 or in the median. They also featured a variety of station siting options in the South Federal Way, Fife, East Tacoma, and Tacoma Dome station areas.

The most promising alternatives from the evaluations are now being presented for further public discussion as part of scoping for the EIS.



**Exhibit 3 Alternatives Development Process**

## Potential Alternatives for the EIS

Based on the Alternatives Evaluation conducted to date, FTA and Sound Transit are asking for comments on a remaining set of potential alternatives for the approximately 10-mile light rail extension in a corridor generally parallel to I-5 and connecting from Federal Way and the Tacoma Dome station area. The alternatives address choices about whether the alignments follow generally along I-5, SR 99, or other streets, and where the stations are sited. Except in Federal Way and south King County, where the alignments following I-5 and SR 99 are farther apart, most of the remaining alignments and stations are in the same general vicinity and are one to several blocks from each other.

The light rail alternatives currently being considered are fully separated from traffic and include four stations located in South Federal Way, Fife, East Tacoma, and near the existing Tacoma Dome station area. All light rail alternatives would also cross the Puyallup Tribe Reservation and the Puyallup River. Additionally, at the Tacoma Dome station area, the light rail alternatives would require tail tracks extending beyond the station (tail tracks or storage tracks and switches are needed for operations serving any terminus station).

## No-Build Alternative

As required under NEPA, a No-Build Alternative will be included in the EIS as a baseline to compare to the build alternatives. The No-Build Alternative reflects the existing transportation system plus the transportation improvements included in PSRC's Transportation Improvement Program. The southern terminus of the Link light rail system would remain at the Federal Way Transit Center, and the TDLE project would not be constructed.

## Potential Light Rail Alternatives

The potential light rail alternatives being considered for further study in the EIS are shown in **Exhibits 4 through 6**.

Heading south from the Federal Way Transit Center, potential alternatives generally follow along the west side of I-5 through Milton, or turn westward to align with SR 99. There are nine alternatives in South Federal Way (SF) that can generally be grouped into three alignment families:

- **I-5 West** – The I-5 West alternatives include SF 8: I-5/S 356th Street and SF 9: I-5/Jet
- **Enchanted Parkway** – The Enchanted Parkway alternatives include SF 2 West: Enchanted/S 352nd Street, SF 2 East: Enchanted/S 352nd Street, and SF 3: Enchanted/S 356th Street
- **SR 99** – The SR 99 alternatives include SF 4A: 99 North (SR 99 to I-5), SF 4B: 99 North (SR 99), SF 4C: 99 North (I-5 to SR 99), and SF 4D: 99 North (I-5 to SR 99 to I-5)

In South Federal Way, the station options are located between S 348th and S 356th streets with several options near I-5, along Enchanted Parkway, or on SR 99 near S 348th Street. The station options assume a 500-space park-and-ride.

Near the city limits of Milton and Fife, SR 99 and I-5 make a 90-degree curve to the west and are close together. In this area, the I-5 alternatives and SR 99 alternatives both enter Fife along SR 99. There are five alternatives in Fife that can generally be grouped into three alignment families:

- **12th Street** – The 12th Street alternative includes Fife 1: 12th Street E
- **North of 15th Street** – The North of 15th Street alternatives include Fife 3A: North of 15th Street E and Fife 3B: North of 15th Street E
- **South of 15th Street** – The South of 15th Street alternatives include Fife 4A: South of 15th Street E and Fife 4B: South of 15th Street E

The Fife alternatives are all located to the north of SR 99 to reach a station location near 59th Avenue E and 15th or 12th Streets E. The Fife station options assume a 500-space park-and-ride. The potential alignments then continue toward the Puyallup River either along SR 99/Pacific Highway E or along I-5.

Approaching the crossing of the Puyallup River, the alternatives are located near I-5 and south of Puyallup Avenue. There are six alternatives in East Tacoma (ET) that can generally be categorized into four alignment families:

- **Puyallup Avenue** – The Puyallup Avenue alternative includes ET 1: Puyallup Avenue
- **East 25th Street** – The East 25th Street alternative includes ET 2: E 25th Street
- **East 26th Street** – The East 26th Street alternatives include ET 3A: E 26th Street to E 25th Street, ET 3B: 26th Street East, and ET 6: 26th Street West
- **East 27th Street** – The East 27th Street alternative includes ET 5: E 27th Street

The East Tacoma Station would be located on E 25th, E 26th, E 27th, or Puyallup Avenue about a block east or west of Portland Avenue E.

Potential alternatives would follow E 25th, E 26th, E 27th, or Puyallup Avenue to the Tacoma Dome Station area. There are seven alternatives at the Tacoma Dome (TD) that can generally be categorized into four alignment families:

- **Puyallup Avenue** – The Puyallup Avenue alternative includes TD 1: Puyallup Avenue
- **East 25th Street** – The East 25th Street alternatives include TD 2: 25th Street West and TD 3: 25th Street East
- **East 26th Street** – The East 26th Street alternative includes TD 4 East: E 26th Street In-Street and TD 4 East: E 26th Street Off-Street
- **East 26th Street to East 27th Street** – The East 26th Street to East 27th Street alternatives include TD 4 West: E 26th Street to E 27th Street and TD 4 West: E 27th Street

The Tacoma Dome Station options are in the vicinity of East D, E, or G Streets.

## Alternatives No Longer being Considered

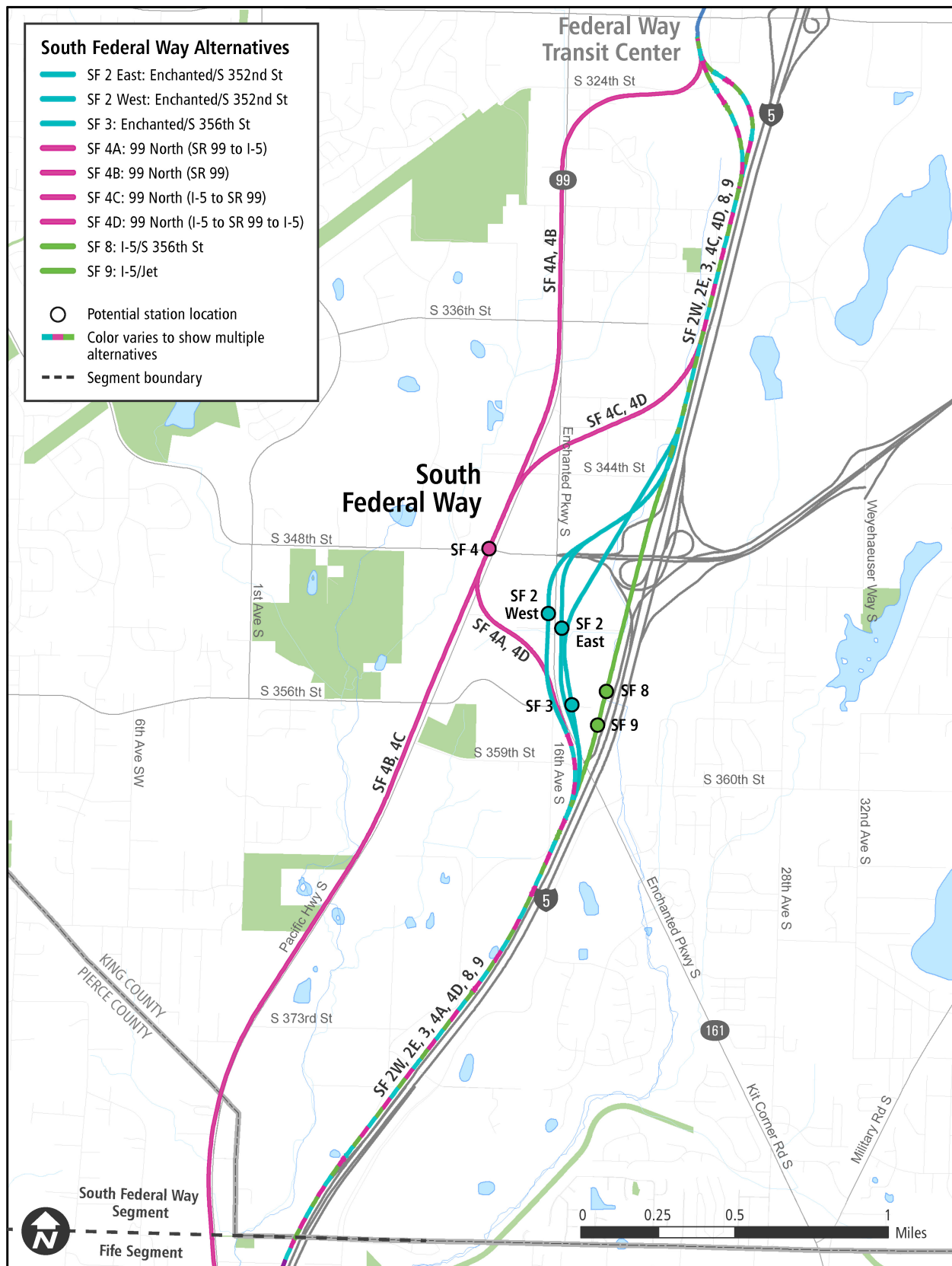
The alternatives that the project's Elected Leadership Group recommended removing from consideration due to the alternatives analysis findings and public comments were:

- **I-5 Median Alternatives.** Median alternatives from Federal Way through Fife to Tacoma were removed due to lack of effective access to station locations, lower transit oriented development (TOD) potential, higher potential environmental impacts due to the need for I-5 widenings, higher construction impacts, and higher engineering risks and challenges due to additional structures and bridges needed to cross I-5 and reconfigure existing ramps.
- **I-5 East/South Alternatives.** These alternatives transitioned from the Federal Way Transit Center to cross over I-5 and run on the east and then south sides of the freeway, from Federal Way through Milton and Fife to Tacoma. They were removed due to lower-performing station locations based on multimodal access, ridership, and TOD potential. They also carried higher engineering risks and the challenges of additional structures crossing I-5. They had greater environmental impacts compared to other alternatives, including greater impacts to properties of the Puyallup Tribe in Fife and Tacoma and impacts to residential neighborhoods in the East Tacoma area south of I-5.
- **Puyallup Avenue River Crossing.** A bridge across the Puyallup River adjacent to the Puyallup Avenue Bridge was removed due to impacts to a site of major cultural significance to the Puyallup Tribe adjacent to the Puyallup River.
- **Fife I-5 Alternative (representative project from ST3).** An alternative that paralleled the west side of I-5 in Milton and the north side of I-5 through Fife, including a station adjacent to the freeway near 54th Avenue E, was removed due to conflicts with the planned State Route 167 (SR 167) interchange, impacts on major properties of the Puyallup Tribe, and lower scores for land use, mobility, access, congestion, and TOD.

## Other Sound Transit Light Rail Projects in the Area

The north end of the TDLE connects to the Federal Way Link Extension, a 7.8-mile light rail route from the Angle Lake Station in SeaTac to the Federal Way Transit Center, scheduled to open in 2024.

The ST3 Plan also includes the Operations and Maintenance Facility South (OMF South) in the south corridor (south King and Pierce counties). The OMF South supports overall system expansion by providing additional capacity to store, clean, service, and maintain light rail vehicles. Potential sites for this independent project are being evaluated in a separate SEPA EIS. Additional information for the OMF South project can be found on the Sound Transit website at: [www.soundtransit.org/omfs](http://www.soundtransit.org/omfs).



## Exhibit 4 Potential Alternatives being Considered in South Federal Way



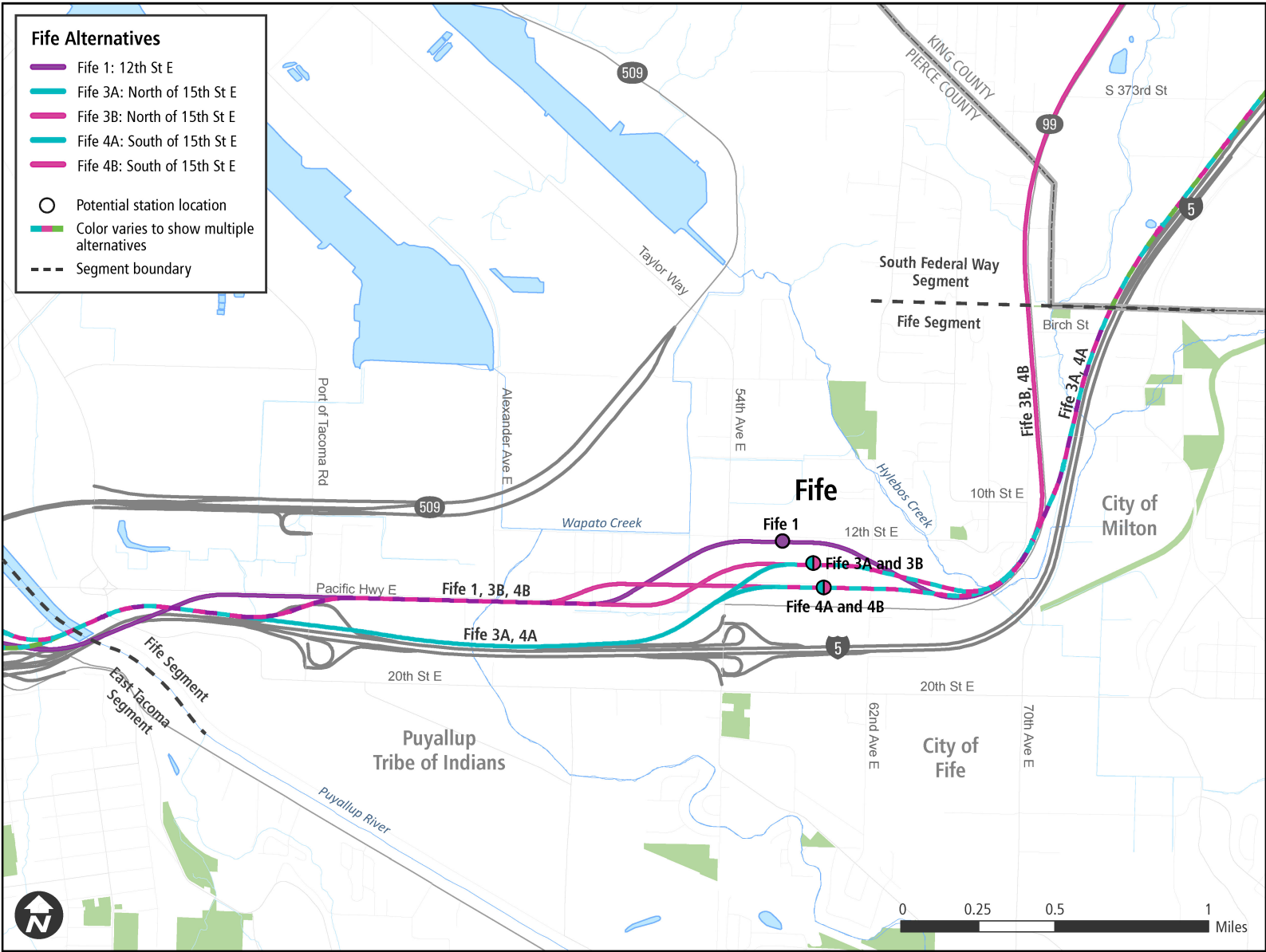


Exhibit 5 Potential Alternatives being Considered in Fife

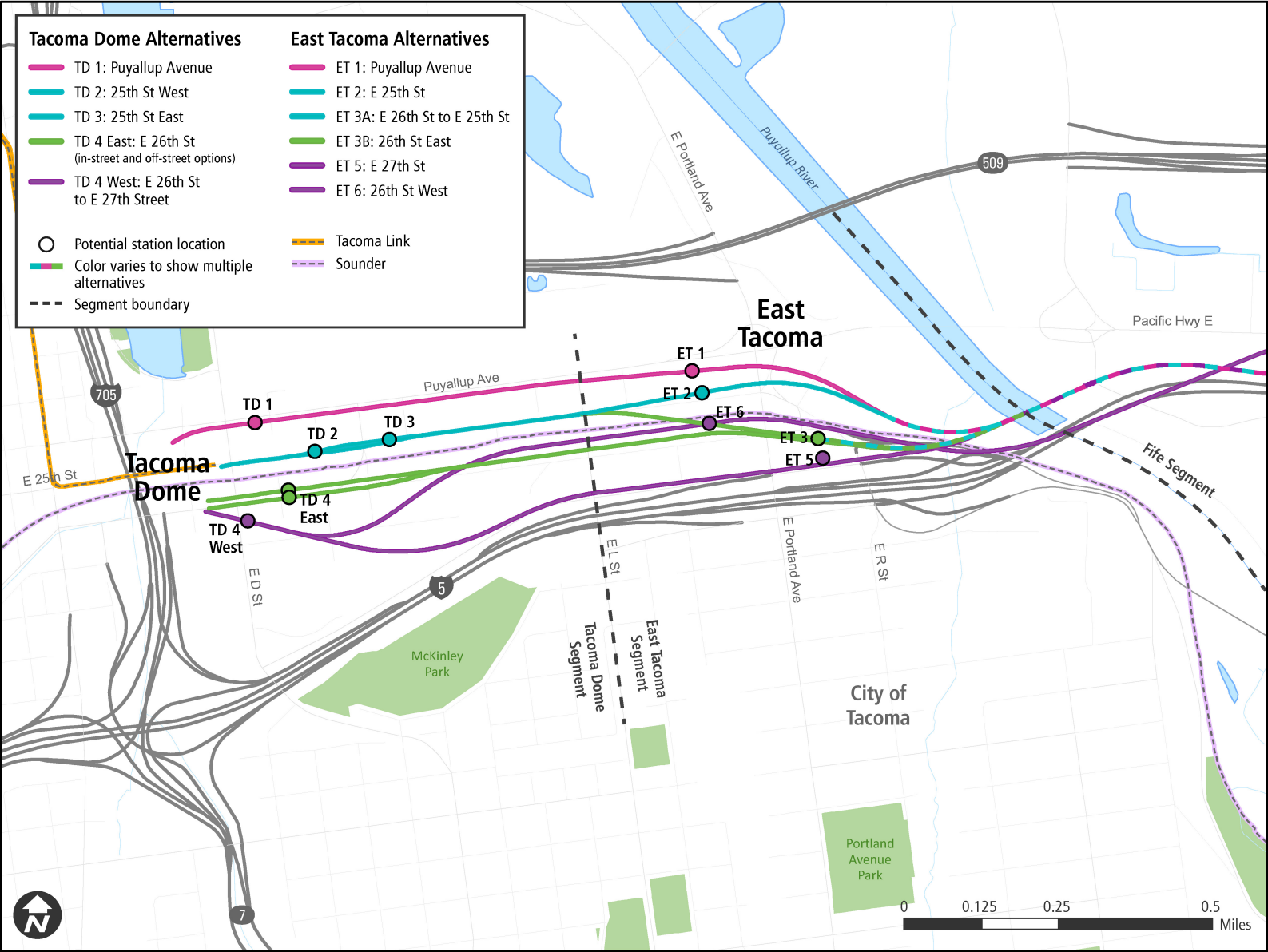


Exhibit 6 Potential Alternatives being Considered in the East Tacoma and Tacoma Dome Segments

## 6 TOPICS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE EIS

The project will follow federal and state regulations and guidance to identify and address the potential for significant environmental impacts caused by the construction or operation of the TDLE project alternatives. Public comments during the scoping process help the project team to define the scope of analysis and identify potential significant impacts to be avoided, minimized, or mitigated. The following environmental elements are anticipated to be studied in the EIS:

- Transportation
  - Regional travel
  - Transit
  - Local travel—traffic, access and circulation, safety, bicycling, walking, and parking
  - Freight movement
- Land Use
- Economics
- Acquisitions and Displacements
- Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources—including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and tribal resources and ownership
- Ecosystems
- Water Resources—including floodplains and crossing the Puyallup River
- Parks and Recreation
- Noise and Vibration
- Community Impacts
- Public Services and Utilities—including the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) Transmission Line
- Visual Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazardous Materials
- Air Quality—including greenhouse gas emissions
- Energy
- Electromagnetic Fields
- Construction Impacts
- Cumulative Effects—including climate change and environmental sustainability, as well as the effects of other projects such as the OMF South
- Environmental Justice
- Section 4(f)—a U.S. Department of Transportation regulation protecting parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or historic resources



## 7 NEXT STEPS

Following scoping, Sound Transit will develop and release a Scoping Summary Report. The report will summarize the comments Sound Transit received about the project's Draft Purpose and Need, the range of alternatives, and environmental issues.

### Identifying the Preferred Alternative and other EIS Alternatives

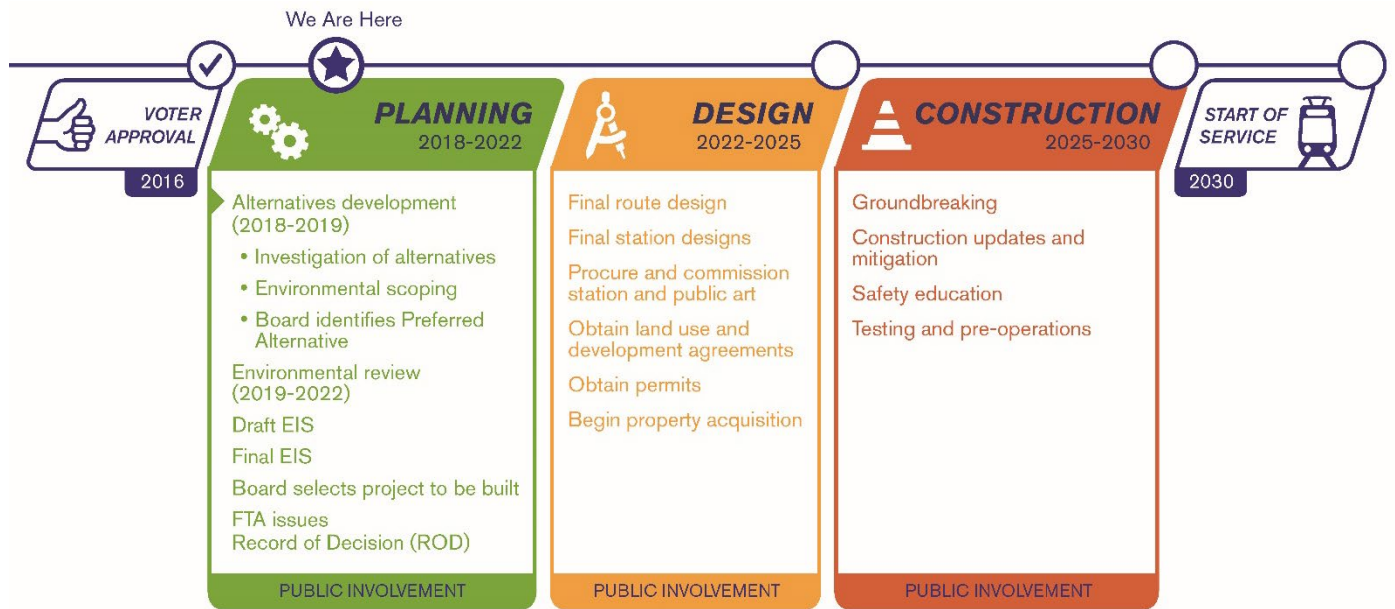
Following scoping, FTA and Sound Transit will review public comments and other planning information developed to date and determine the range of alternatives to study in a Draft EIS. The Board may identify a Preferred Alternative at that time. The Board meetings allow public comment, and Sound Transit provides meeting agendas and related materials prior to each Board meeting. This would include any briefings or motions involving the TDLE project.

### Project Timeline and Process

Once the Board identifies the alternatives to be evaluated, the next steps in the process include:

- **Preparing and issuing a Draft EIS**—Work on the Draft EIS is anticipated to start in summer 2019. Sound Transit will evaluate the Preferred Alternative and other alternatives in the Draft EIS. FTA and Sound Transit will publish the Draft EIS with a public review and comment period of at least 45 days, including public meetings and a public hearing.
- **Preparing a Final EIS**—FTA and Sound Transit will consider comments and the Draft EIS findings. The Board will confirm or modify the Preferred Alternative following the evaluation of public comments on the Draft EIS and develop a Final EIS. The Final EIS will update the environmental information for the Preferred Alternative and other alternatives; respond to public, agency, and tribal comments on the Draft EIS; and further define measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential project impacts.
- **Obtaining environmental approvals and commencing final design, construction, and operation**—After the Final EIS is published, the Board will select the project to be built. FTA will then issue a federal Record of Decision (ROD) that describes the environmental findings and mitigation commitments. Following these actions, the project will advance into final design, permitting, construction, and operation.

**Exhibit 7** shows the general project timeline.



**Exhibit 7 Project Timeline**

### Public, Agency, and Tribal Involvement

FTA and Sound Transit are inviting all interested parties to be involved in decisions about this project. To learn more or to get involved, interested parties can attend a scoping meeting, visit the online open house, or submit written comments according to the procedures outlined in Section 2 of this report.

FTA and Sound Transit have prepared a Coordination Plan describing how agencies, tribes, and the public will be involved throughout the EIS process. The plan is available on the Sound Transit website at: [www.soundtransit.org/tdlink](http://www.soundtransit.org/tdlink). Meetings to coordinate and receive input from the Elected Leadership Group, Stakeholders Group, and Interagency Group are anticipated to continue throughout the project.

After scoping, Sound Transit will continue to provide opportunities for public involvement. Sound Transit will hold public meetings and hearings on the Draft EIS during its public comment period. In addition to the items listed in the project timeline, ongoing meetings will be held with the public, tribes, business and community groups, and government agencies. The project website will include the latest project information. Project information will also be periodically sent via email to individuals on the project's email list.

Elected Leadership Group recommendations on alternatives, along with comments received during the scoping period, will be presented to the Board prior to the Board identifying a Preferred Alternative and other alternatives to study in the Draft EIS.

## **8 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION AND REFERENCES**

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