



**Racial Equity Toolkit Report:**  
Environmental Review Phase



February 2022 | DRAFT

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions (WSBLE) will provide fast, reliable light rail connections to dense residential and job centers throughout the region. In addition, a new downtown Seattle light rail tunnel will provide capacity for the entire regional system to operate efficiently. These two separate Link extensions are part of the Sound Transit system expansion approved by voters in November 2016. While this project offers an array of potential benefits, in the past communities of color have endured a disproportionate share of impacts from major infrastructure investments, including transportation projects. These projects have historically moved forward without centering Black, Indigenous, People of Color voices who continue to bear the burden of systemic racism, COVID-19, and racialized violence. To that end, Sound Transit and the City of Seattle are partnering to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) to the WSBLE project, building upon past community-led planning processes, raising up community voices, and improving coordination within and among agencies to center racial equity and focus on community values.

## 1.1 Racial Equity Toolkit

The RET process is a cornerstone of the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative. The vision of the Seattle Office for Civil Rights, which houses the Race and Social Justice

Initiative Strategic Team is: "A City of Liberated People where Communities Historically Impacted by Racism, Oppression, and Colonization Hold Power and Thrive." To do this requires ending individual racism, institutional racism and structural racism by shifting real decision making power and equitable resources to those most harmed by a lingering legacy and reality of racism in our community. The Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) lays out a process and a set of questions to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, initiatives, programs, and budget issues to address the impacts on racial equity (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Racial Equity Toolkit process steps (Source: City of Seattle)



The RET offers a framework and process for centering the people most harmed by racialization and vulnerable to systemic racism in project development and project outcomes – informing data analysis, technical evaluation, and the focus and extent of community-centered engagement. The RET also provides a framework for monitoring and evaluation going forward, with an emphasis on reporting back to the communities and stakeholders we are accountable to.

A key focus for the RET is community-centered engagement to understand community needs, respond to historical and present impacts made by large infrastructure projects, and consider potential burdens and benefits of the project as expressed by the community. Direct community input is a vital component of the RET process because it centers the conversation on those places, businesses, and community resources of great importance to communities of color. The RET process requires rigorous data collection that is both qualitative and quantitative.

## 1.2 Purpose of Report

A key component of the RET process is creating a report to transparently share findings with all stakeholders in the project. This draft report offers an opportunity to make the Environmental Justice analysis more accessible and provides an opportunity to incorporate additional historical background and context, such as the root causes of racial inequity. This report elevates opportunities, issues and other considerations that affect communities of color and low-income populations for the public and decision-makers. It provides an overview of the WSBLE project and the RET information gathered during the environmental

review phase, and documents how that information is being used to inform the project development process. This information will also inform the Sound Transit Board when it confirms or modifies the Preferred Alternatives to be carried forward into the Final EIS. Figure 2 describes the planning phase of the WSBLE project and

Figure 2. How the RET informs decision-making during the planning phase of the WSBLE project





when and how the RET process and documentation helps inform decision-making.

### 1.3 Project Description

The WSBLE Project would consist of two separate Link light rail extensions: one to West Seattle and the other to Ballard. The extension to West Seattle would operate from downtown Seattle to West Seattle's Alaska Junction neighborhood. The Ballard extension would operate from downtown Seattle to Ballard's Market Street area and include a new rail-only tunnel from the Chinatown/International District to South Lake Union and Seattle Center/Uptown.

The WSBLE Project began with alternatives development from 2017 to 2019. Alternatives development started with the representative project from the voter-approved system plan, ST3. From there, Sound Transit developed alternatives for study and review, including route and station locations. Community members, stakeholders, elected officials and partner agency staff provided comments on alternatives, helping to screen for reasonable alternatives to carry forward. Based on input and analysis, in 2019, the Sound Transit Board of Directors identified

a preferred alternative in addition to other alternative(s) to be studied during environmental review.

### 1.4 Environmental Review Process

During environmental review, as required by state and federal law, Sound Transit studies potential environmental impacts of the alternatives and publishes a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

A Draft EIS is an environmental review document that outlines the possible routes and station locations under consideration – collectively called “alternatives.” It will help Sound Transit, our partner agencies, the public and other decision-makers understand the potential impacts and benefits of each alternative by describing how the alternatives might affect the natural and built environments and transportation systems during both construction and future operation.

The Draft EIS also includes an environmental justice analysis that evaluates whether the WSBLE Project would result in disproportionately high and adverse effects on communities of color and low-income populations, based on potential project impacts, benefits, and proposed mitigation. The analysis also

Figure 3. WSBLE project phases and schedule



\*Dates reflect an affordable schedule based on current financial projections and cost estimate, and a target schedule.

describes Sound Transit's engagement with these populations to encourage their active participation in the planning process.

The RET builds on Sound Transit's environmental justice assessment for this project, documenting potential project impacts and benefits, and community feedback. However, given that the RET process is guided by a different framework than the Draft EIS environmental justice requirements, the report on the RET process and findings is structured differently, and is oriented around RET outcomes for the project.

Sound Transit published the Draft EIS for the WSBLE project on January 28, 2022. Community members now have an opportunity to review the Draft EIS and comment on the analysis during a 90-day public comment period. Comments on the Draft EIS will help to inform the Sound Transit Board when it confirms or modifies the preferred alternative. The preferred alternative, along with the other Draft EIS alternatives, will then be included in the Final EIS, which is expected to be published in 2023. After publication of the Final EIS, the Sound Transit Board will select the project to be built.

## 1.5 Community Engagement

A variety of community members and stakeholders are engaged in the WSBLE Project. The RET directs engagement efforts to focus on reaching and hearing from Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) community members specifically. The focus on reaching those historically most impacted is to learn from history and engage them early in understanding opportunities and solving problems. Given the state of our world and the current and ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the disproportionate impacts both have had on BIPOC communities, this has created an even bigger challenge. Therefore this report will be released as a draft so that we can truth-check our work with BIPOC

communities and gather more information for upcoming decisions.

In addition, we have implemented a much stronger relationship with the City of Seattle's Department of Neighborhoods Community Liaison program, a trusted advocate model. This model works directly with trusted community members as messenger. This was particularly important as many traditional forms of communication were shut down during the pandemic. We engaged eleven Community Liaisons first with a series of six training sessions. This effort aligns with our commitment to build capacity in BIPOC communities around this project and transportation knowledge generally. The Community Liaisons also built individual work plans that included community direct engagement, collaboration with community based organizations and ethnic media to support readying BIPOC communities for the release of the Draft EIS. The partnership will continue during the Draft EIS comment period to support communities' ability to make comment.

## 1.6 Racial Equity Toolkit Collaborative

The Racial Equity Toolkit Collaborative is an interagency team comprising staff from Sound Transit's WSBLE project and City staff from the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD), Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON), and the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR).

To focus and inform work toward the RET outcomes, early efforts included compiling and analyzing data on race within the corridor. Initial work described the racial and ethnic makeup of communities within a half-mile of stations along the representative alignment, using five-year American Community Survey estimates (2011-2016). Chinatown-International District

(C-ID) is the only station area identified as having a concentration of communities of color in the WSBLE project corridor greater than the citywide average.

In West Seattle, a higher percentage of communities of color lie within the bike and transit sheds of the Delridge and Avalon stations, but are outside of those stations' immediate walksheds. Other station areas along the project's representative alignment are generally located within areas having populations of color at or below the city average and relatively higher average household incomes.

## 2 RET OUTCOMES

The RET process and report is structured around RET outcomes and elevates opportunities, issues and other considerations that affect communities of color and low-income populations for the public and decision-makers, informing the environmental process and project outcomes. These RET outcomes are iterative in nature and capture a snapshot in time. They may evolve based on community feedback as the project progresses. The RET Collaborative acknowledges that while the WSBLE project is not responsible for past historical harms, it will contribute to cumulative effects from all infrastructure projects in the communities in the project corridor, past and future. The RET collaborative commits to close collaboration with impacted communities in an effort to repair harm.

During the Draft EIS phase, racial equity outcomes were updated as follows:

- Advance environmental and economic justice to improve economic and health outcomes for communities of color.
- Enhance mobility and access for communities of color and low-income populations.

- Create opportunities for equitable development that include expanding housing and community assets for communities of color.
- Avoid disproportionate impacts on communities of color and low-income populations.
- Create a sense of belonging for communities of color at all stations, making spaces where everyone sees themselves as belonging, feeling safe, and welcome.
- Meaningfully involve communities of color and low-income populations in the project.

Based on continuous community feedback throughout the alternatives development and environmental review phase, the RET team further focused on the following outcomes:

### Chinatown-ID station area RET Outcomes

- Limit harmful impacts of the project and work with impacted communities to identify opportunities to repair past harm
- Maximize connections for all users
- Community shapes decisions that impact them, through self-determination and with a 100-year vision for future generations

### Delridge corridor RET Outcomes

- An excellent transfer experience including bus and rail integration and options for RET community-desired amenities provided at the station
- Equitable transit-oriented development serving the community

### 3 DRAFT EIS ALTERNATIVES

The WSBLE Project consists of two extensions: the West Seattle Link Extension and the Ballard Link Extension. The West Seattle Link Extension would start service in 2032, initially providing service between an Alaska Junction Station and a new station in SODO. In 2037-2039<sup>1</sup>, the Ballard Link Extension would start service between Ballard Station and SODO Station, with service continuing south to the Tacoma Dome Station using the existing Central Link light rail line. The Ballard Link Extension project would also permanently connect the West Seattle Link Extension tail tracks to the existing Link light rail line, allowing it to continue north to Lynnwood. It would eventually extend to Everett.

Within each extension, three types of alternatives are evaluated in the Draft EIS in addition to a no build alternative: preferred alternatives, preferred alternatives with third-party funding, and other EIS alternatives. The term preferred alternative indicates a “preference” among alternatives to be considered but is not a final decision or obligation. Some of the preferred alternatives require third-party funding. This means Sound Transit will need funding to cover additional costs from added project elements that were not identified in the voter-approved Sound Transit 3 Plan from 2016. The preferred alternative may change or be modified in the Final EIS. The WSBLE alternatives being studied in the Draft EIS are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. WSBLE Draft EIS alternatives



<sup>1</sup> Dates reflect an affordable schedule based on current financial

projections and cost estimates, and a target schedule.

### 3.1 West Seattle Link Extension

The West Seattle Link Extension would begin south of South Holgate Street and include a new SODO Station that would allow for transfers with the existing SODO Station on the existing light rail line. The West Seattle Link Extension would travel south from the SODO Station across South Lander Street either at-grade or on an elevated guideway and continue south towards South Spokane Street on an elevated guideway. In the vicinity of South Spokane Street, it would turn west on a new elevated structure either north or south of the existing West Seattle Bridge, where it would cross the Duwamish Waterway (also known as the Duwamish River) on a high-level fixed bridge structure. On the west side of the Duwamish Waterway, the guideway would remain mostly elevated to the west side of the Delridge valley. In the West Seattle Junction area, the guideway could be elevated or in a tunnel. A tunnel in West Seattle was not included in the Sound Transit 3 Plan (Sound Transit 2016); therefore, third-party funding could be required for alternatives that include tunnels. Three stations would be constructed in West Seattle: Delridge, Avalon, and Alaska Junction.

### 3.2 Ballard Link Extension

The Ballard Link Extension would begin near the existing SODO Station and proceed north to enter a new tunnel under Downtown Seattle. It would pass through the Chinatown-International District and have a new underground International District/Chinatown Station connected to the existing station. It would generally follow the corridor of 5th Avenue or 6th Avenue and Westlake Avenue North through Downtown Seattle to South Lake Union. At South Lake Union, the tunnel would turn west toward Uptown. Five underground stations—Midtown, Westlake, Denny, South Lake Union, and Seattle Center stations—would be included.

Passengers would be able to transfer from the Ballard Link Extension to the existing Central Link light rail line at SODO, International District/Chinatown, and Westlake stations. Passengers currently travelling directly between south Seattle and points north of Westlake Station on the Central Link line and the future line connecting West Seattle to Everett (including the Capitol Hill, University of Washington, University District, Roosevelt Station, or Northgate stations and the future stations in Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace, Lynnwood, and Everett) would be required to transfer at either the SODO, International District/Chinatown, or Westlake stations when the Ballard Link Extension is built.

The Ballard Link Extension would exit the tunnel at a portal near Elliott Avenue West and continue either elevated, at-grade, or in a retained cut along Elliott Avenue West. It would then travel through Interbay either elevated along 15th Avenue West or elevated on the west side of Interbay Golf Center. It would cross over or under Salmon Bay near 15th Avenue Northwest with a bridge or in a tunnel and continue north to a terminus near Northwest Market Street in Ballard. Stations would be constructed at Smith Cove, Interbay, and Ballard.

## 4 CHINATOWN/INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT STATION AREA EVALUATION

### 4.1 Neighborhood Context and Overview

The Chinatown-International District (C-ID)<sup>2</sup> station area includes the historic Pioneer Square and Chinatown-International District neighborhoods. The C-ID, located just east of Pioneer Square just south of downtown, is the center of Seattle's Asian-American community. Settled around the same time as Pioneer Square in the mid-to-late 1800's, the C-ID is generally defined geographically as the area between 4th Avenue S, Rainier Avenue S, Yesler Way and S Charles Street/S Dearborn Street, and consists of the three smaller neighborhoods of Chinatown, Japantown, and Little Saigon. The Seattle Chinatown Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986.

The C-ID station area is the only station area densely populated by communities of color in the WSBLE project corridor. A majority of C-ID residents are of Chinese ethnicity, but there are also sizable communities of residents of Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean and Filipino ancestry. People of color account for approximately 65% of the population, as compared to a citywide average of 34%, and more than half speak a language other than English at home. Approximately 82% of C-ID residents are renters, far higher than the city average of 53%, and 80% of housing units within a 10-minute walkshed of proposed station areas are rent-restricted or subsidized rental units. The median household

income currently stands at \$33,500 per annum, approximately half of the citywide median, and approximately 30% of households fall below the federal poverty level. The area also has higher-than-average proportions of elderly and disabled residents, and based on a 2020 C-ID Healthy Community Action Plan study, people living and working in the C-ID are less healthy than those in other neighborhoods in Seattle and King County, with an average lifespan seven years shorter than that of most well-off communities.



<sup>2</sup> Chinatown-International District is the name for this neighborhood according to City Ordinance 119297 (1999), and the existing light rail station in this neighborhood is named the International District/Chinatown Station. Due to this, Chinatown-International District

or C-ID is used when referring to the neighborhood, Draft EIS segment, and station area, and International District/Chinatown Station is used when referring to the station.



Draft EIS alternatives include potential sites for the International District/Chinatown Station on either 4th or 5th Avenues S, in the vicinity of the existing International District/Chinatown Link Light Rail station. The existing light rail tracks run underground between 4th and 5th Avenues S, parallel to the heavy rail lines utilized by freight rail, Amtrak and Sound Transit's Sounder commuter rail service located just to the west of 4th Avenue S and is accessible by a public plaza that is adjacent to Union Station. There are also major bus connections along 4th Avenue S on the west side of Union Station and at the northwest corner of 4th Avenue S and S Jackson Street. Due to this convergence of multiple transit modes, this area serves as the busiest transportation hub in the city.

*Figure 6. C-ID station area on 4th Avenue S looking north from S Weller Street*



In addition to the convergence of transit modes, this area is where the historic Pioneer Square and C-ID neighborhoods come together at the intersection of S Jackson Street between 3rd and

5th Avenues S. These two neighborhoods are home to large transportation investments including heavy/light rail, Interstate 5, State Route 99 (SR-99) and the First Hill Streetcar, resulting in poor quality of open spaces and pedestrian connections that have disconnected them from each other and other destinations (waterfront, stadium district and downtown).

This area presents some unique engineering challenges for WSBLE project construction, as much of the C-ID is built on reclaimed tide flat lands that were filled and developed as part of a major city re-grading project completed in 1910. The existing street right-of-way on 4th Avenue S in this vicinity sits atop a viaduct structure that is over 100 years old.

The new International District/Chinatown Station, whether sited under 5th Avenue S or 4th Avenue S, will have a 5-minute walking service area (walkshed) that includes much of C-ID and Pioneer Square neighborhoods. Approximately 59% of the walkshed is zoned "International District Mixed," covering much of the historic neighborhood to the south of S Jackson Street. Most new development in the neighborhood is occurring in the "International District Residential" zoning district to the north of S Jackson St and east of 4th Avenue S, including an affordable housing project and two new condominium towers. These projects are rapidly building out the few undeveloped parcels in that area, reducing the supply of developable land and raising questions about where development will go in the district – if at all – in the future. These dynamics illuminate concerns around economic gentrification and displacement.

## 4.2 RET Outcomes

The socioeconomic and cultural context of the C-ID station area reveals why it is a prime area of focus for the Racial Equity Toolkit work on the WSBLE project. Since the initiation of WSBLE project

development in 2017, City and Sound Transit staff have reviewed past community plans and surveys, had direct conversations with community stakeholders, and reached out broadly to community members to learn about the potential benefits and burdens of the project from the perspective of people most harmed by racialization in the C-ID and Pioneer Square. The early research and community feedback yielded three high-level racial equity outcomes to achieve in delivering the WSBLE project in the neighborhood. This section introduces each outcome, along with how it connects to the history and future of the communities in the C-ID station area.

***Limit harmful impacts of the project and work with impacted communities to identify opportunities to repair past harm.*** There is a history of major transportation and civic improvement projects being planned and implemented in C-ID and Pioneer Square, often with the intention of improving access or providing other community benefits without centering Black, Indigenous, People of Color voices. This history goes back to the founding of Seattle, and continues to the present day via countless projects, from the insertion of the rail lines that supported King Street and Union Stations, to the unfolding of the massive traffic arteries of I-5, I-90, and SR-99, and the more recent redevelopment of the stadium areas. Introducing another layer of regional mobility into these neighborhoods must thus be seen through the lens of cumulative impact. This is especially urgent in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which deeply and directly affected community members and institutions who continue to bear the burden of systemic racism, COVID-19, and racialized violence. The first pillar of racial equity for the WSBLE project in C-ID and Pioneer Square is to limit harmful impacts to the social, cultural, physical, and economic fabric of communities of color and low income populations in these neighborhoods. The Draft EIS for the WSBLE project, informed by the RET process, represents a first step to achieving this outcome by providing an accounting and

evaluation of impacts to aid in identification of a preferred alternative for the project, and to help support a conversation with the communities in the C-ID and Pioneer Square about appropriate mitigation strategies.

***Maximize connections for all users.*** As a result of cumulative, yet often siloed, investments in the transportation system in C-ID and Pioneer Square, Seattle's main hub of passenger rail suffers from a lack of cohesion and connection, a condition that serves as a barrier to the neighborhoods flanking it. King Street and Union Stations were in fact originally competitors, whose sole shared point of reference was the thin ribbon of Jackson Street. Meanwhile, communities in Pioneer Square and C-ID developed along smaller, more intimate streets in parallel with these thoroughfares. The result is a complicated network hamstrung by busy streets and unsafe intersections. The second pillar of racial equity for the WSBLE project in these neighborhoods is to make new and improved connections to and through the station area, for transit riders and community members alike. The [Station Planning Progress Report](#), Draft EIS, and this report provide a palette of ideas and proposals for what this could look like. Further work with the community will help evaluate which of these is most promising, what is missing and interagency partnerships will be developed to support implementation.

***Community shapes decisions that impact them, through self-determination and with a 100-year vision for future generations.*** The past 100 years saw construction of the 4th Avenue viaduct, the heyday and collapse of commercial train service at Union Station; the internment of Japanese-American residents and shop owners during World War II; the construction of I-5 and the stadium complex and the displacement of residents and businesses in Japantown, Little Saigon, and Pioneer Square; and the restoration of connection to the waterfront. In these same 100 years, vibrant communities grew roots in C-ID and Pioneer



Square, and thrived in the face of constant change. Communities in these neighborhoods are looking ahead to the next 100 years, and working to ensure a place that continues to work for future generations. The third pillar of racial equity for the WSBLE project in C-ID and Pioneer Square is to support the community work of realizing their 100-year vision. Exactly what this means remains to be defined, and will likely change in the years ahead, but surely involves an openness to innovative models of delivering, owning, and operating community assets. To this end, Sound Transit, the City of Seattle, and other public agencies are reviewing past and current community plans and surveys and engaging broadly with community members to develop a shared understanding of the community's 100-year vision and align public investments to support its realization.

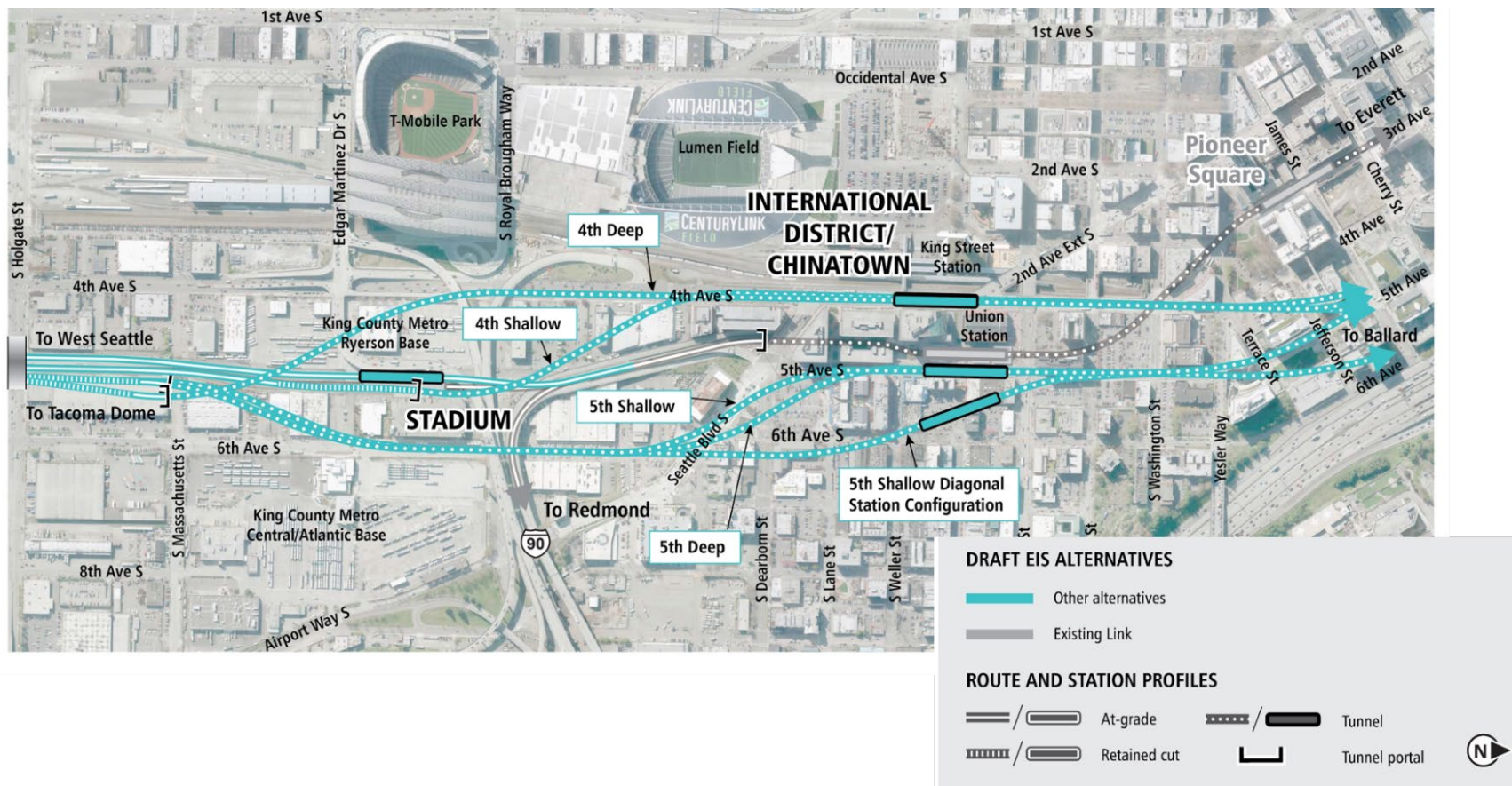
construction type, which has implications for construction effects and duration, potential effects to the surrounding community and station access. Informed by community feedback in this RET focus area, the Sound Transit Board did not identify a preferred alternative in this segment.

## 4.3 Draft EIS Alternatives

### Overview

The Chinatown-International District segment of the WSBLE project includes the area from South Holgate Street to James Street and includes one new station (International District/Chinatown Station). The Sound Transit Board identified two alternatives in the Chinatown-International District segment. These alternatives include five different station and alignment options/configurations serving the Chinatown-International District and surrounding neighborhoods (Figure 7). The alternatives are listed below in a manner that describes both the proposed location of the C-ID station as well as the method of construction for the station and associated tunnel. Text in parentheses includes the corresponding name of the Draft EIS alternative(s) as applicable. These descriptors help communicate the differences between the options in terms of location and

Figure 7. Draft EIS alternatives in the Chinatown-International District segment



#### 4th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-1a)

In the 4th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-1a), a new International District/Chinatown Station would be under 4th Avenue South, west of the existing International District/Chinatown Station. The 4th Avenue South Viaduct (see inset) would be demolished and reconstructed to accommodate construction of this station. The station platform would be approximately 80 feet deep and would be constructed using the cut-and-cover method. Station entrances would be on the west and east side of 4th Avenue South, and the eastern station entrance would also be accessible from the existing International District/Chinatown Station plaza at South King Street. There would be an underground pedestrian connection to the existing southbound International District/Chinatown Station platform. The plan and section for this alternative are shown in Figure 8 and Figure 9, respectively.

#### What is a viaduct?

This photo shows the Fourth Avenue South Viaduct viewed from the King Street Station rail platform below. The roadway deck is supported by columns that can extend approximately 120 feet below existing ground level based on adjacent building information.





Figure 8. Station site plan for 4th Avenue Shallow Alternative and Deep Station Option (CID-1a and CID-1b)

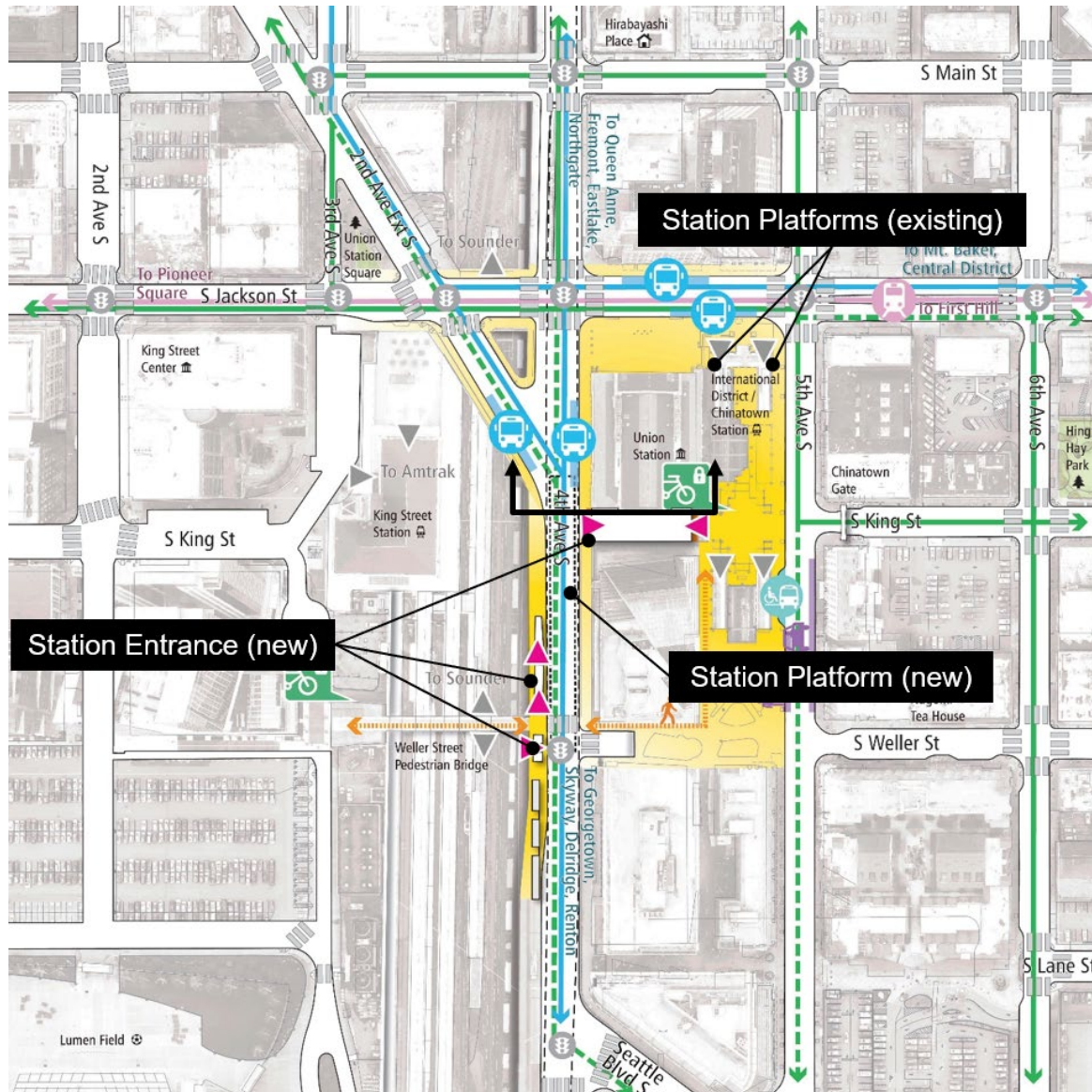
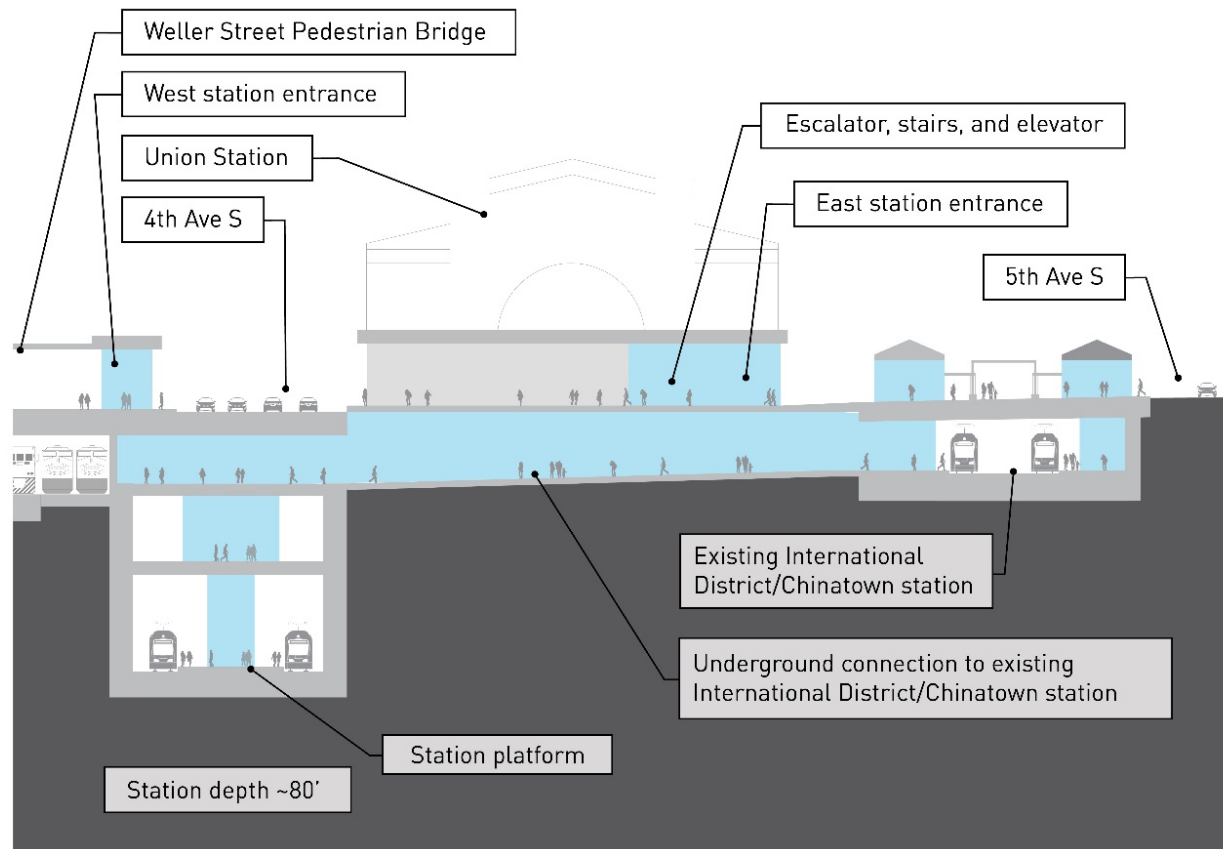


Figure 9. Cross-section for 4th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-1a)

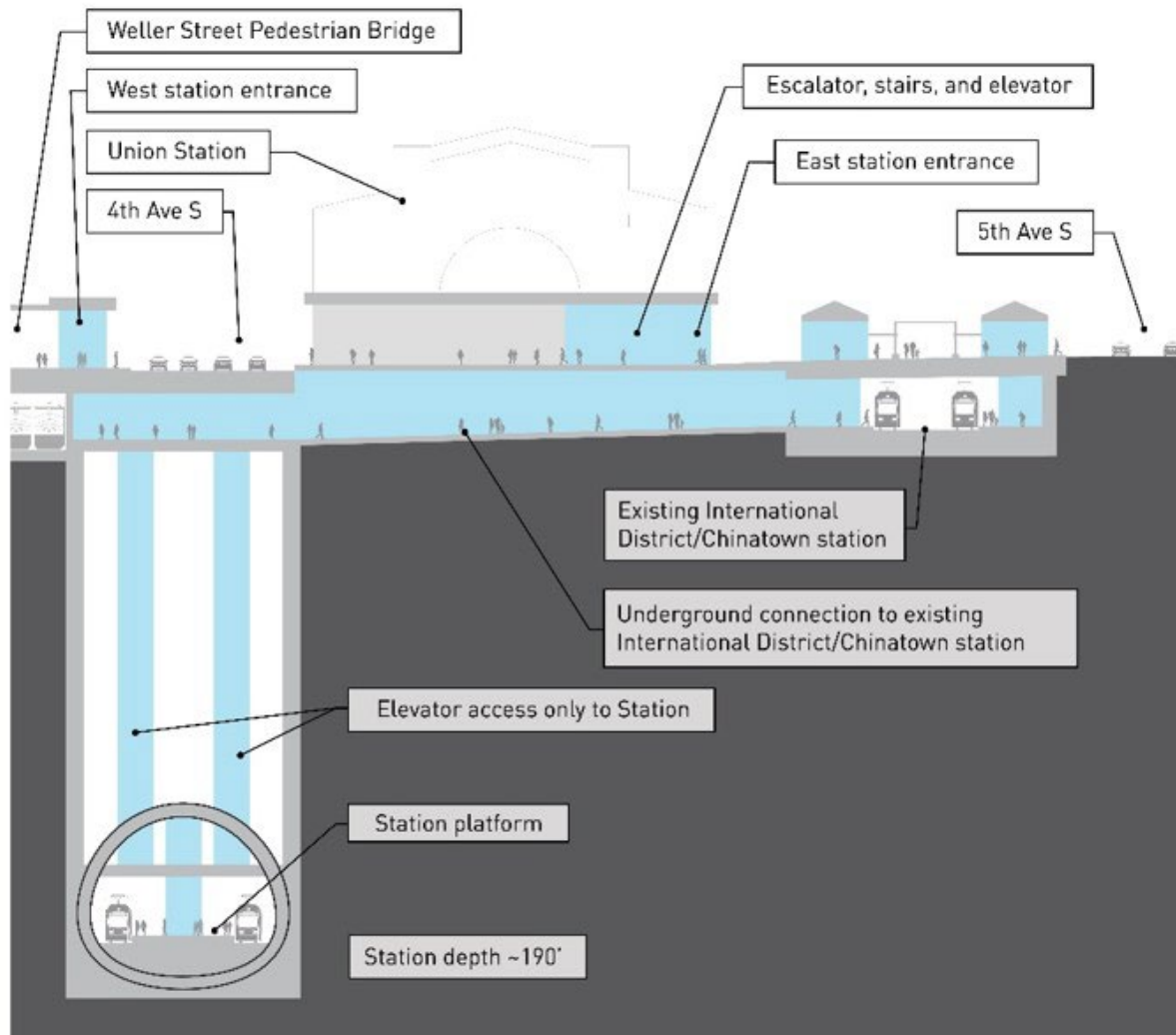


#### 4th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-1b)

In the 4th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-1b), the station location would be under 4th Avenue South, west of the existing International District/Chinatown Station. The station platform would be approximately 190 feet deep. The deeper tunnel and station would allow the station to be mined rather than

constructed using cut-and-cover methods and would reduce the limits of surface disturbance during construction. A portion of the 4th Avenue South Viaduct would be demolished and reconstructed to accommodate construction of this station. There would be an underground pedestrian connection to the existing southbound International District/Chinatown Station platform. The station plan and section for this alternative are shown in Figure 8 and Figure 10, respectively.

Figure 10. Cross-section for 4th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-1b)



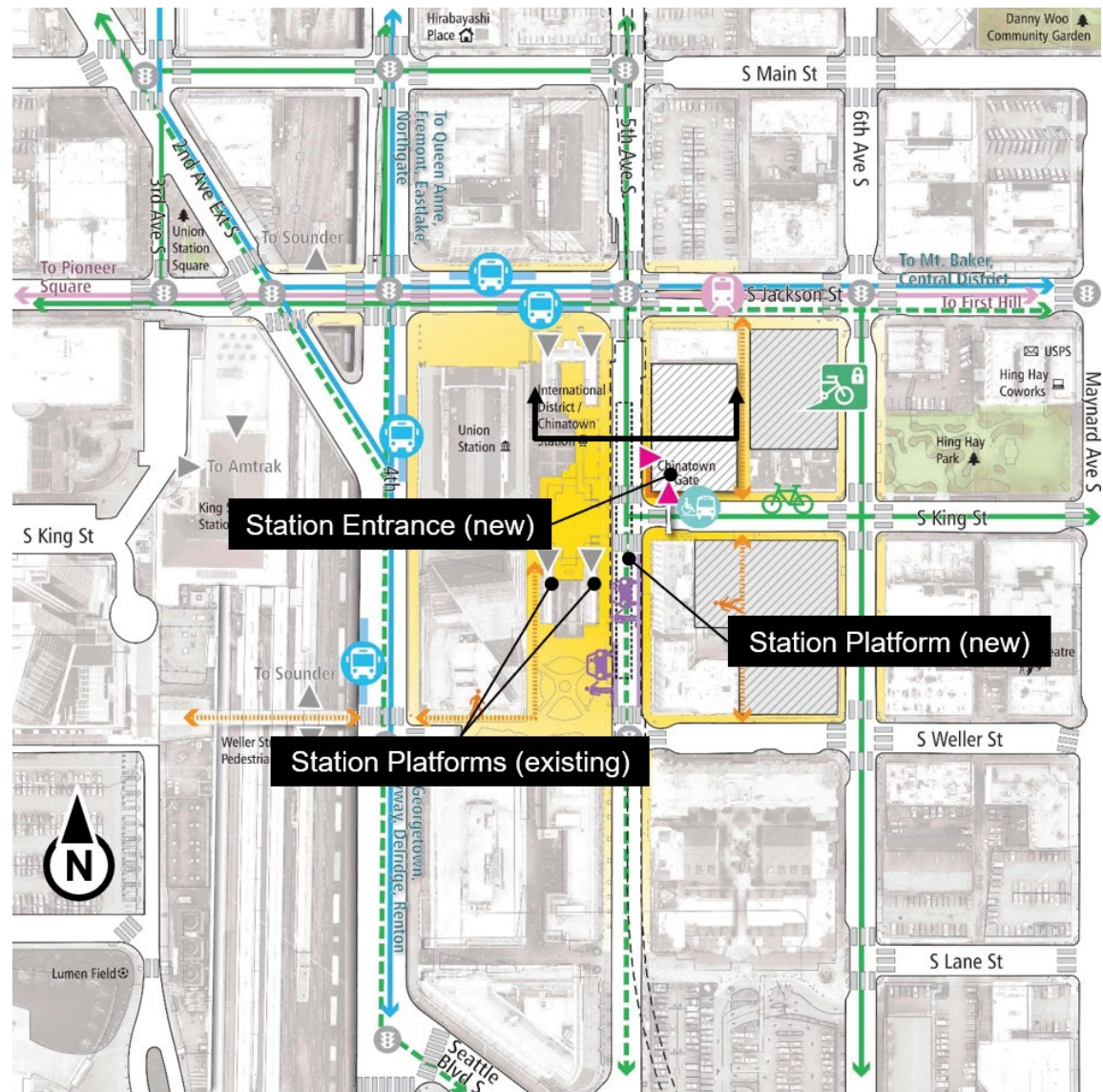


### 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-2a)

In the 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-2a), the International District/Chinatown Station would be under 5th Avenue South, east of the existing International District/Chinatown Station. The northbound station platform would be stacked over the southbound station platform and would be approximately 90 feet deep (to the lower platform). This station would be constructed using the cut-and-cover method.

There is also a diagonal station configuration where the tunnel would be under 6th Avenue S and transition to 5th Avenue S between South Weller Street and S Jackson Street. The station platform for the diagonal station configuration would be between 5th Avenue S and 6th Avenue S, and would be approximately 115 feet deep. This configuration allows platforms to be constructed side by side. The diagonal configuration would reduce surface impacts along 5th Avenue S. In order to minimize impacts to the buildings on the block bounded by 5th Avenue S, S Jackson Street, 6th Avenue S, and S King Street, a portion of the station would be constructed using the cut-and-cover

Figure 11. Station site plan for 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative and Deep Station Option (CID-2a and CID-2b)



method while the portion under the building located on the northwest corner of S King Street and 6th Avenue S would be mined, avoiding displacing that building.

In both configurations, the station entrance would be on the east side of 5th Avenue S, at the corner of S King Street. There would also be an underground pedestrian connection to the existing northbound International District/Chinatown Station platform. The plan and section for the 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-2a)

are shown in Figure 11 and Figure 12, respectively. The plan and section for the 5th Avenue Shallow Diagonal Station Configuration are shown in Figure 13 and Figure 14, respectively.

*Figure 12. Cross section for 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-2a)*

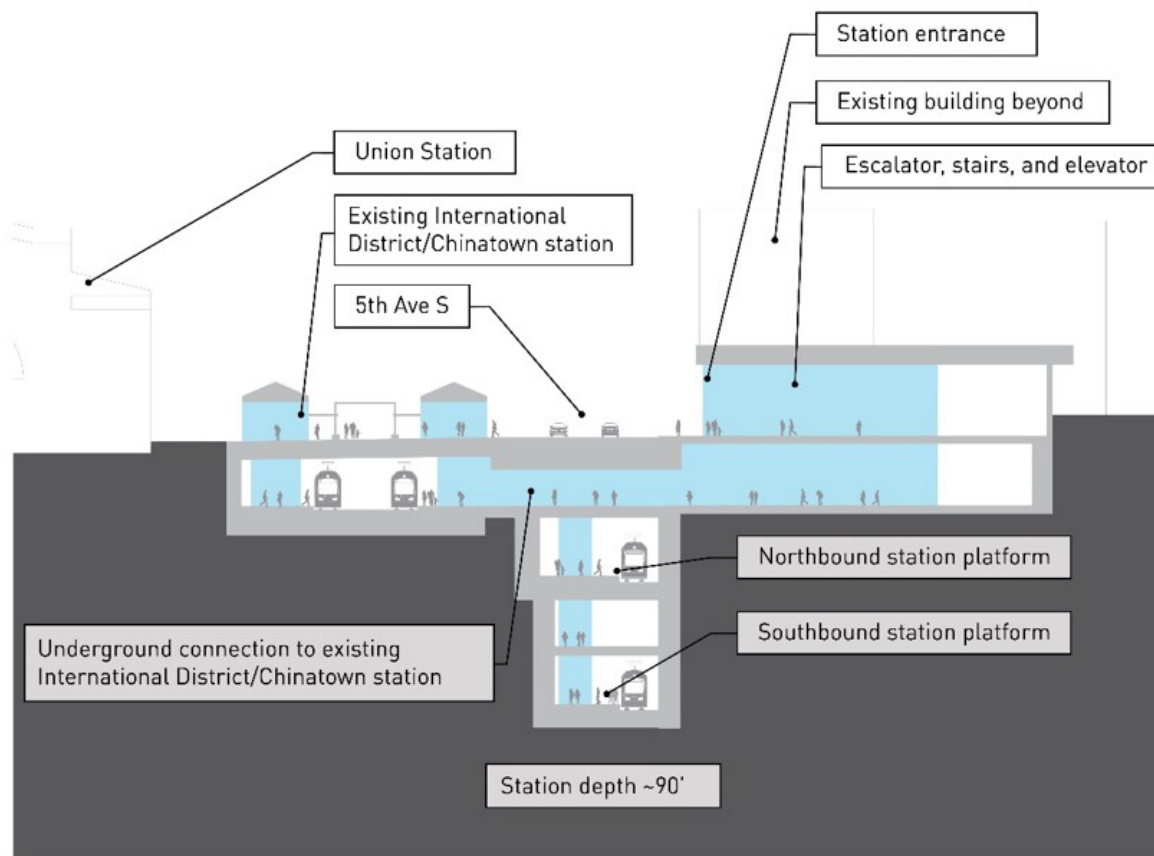




Figure 13. Station site plan for 5th Avenue Shallow Diagonal Station Configuration (CID-2a)

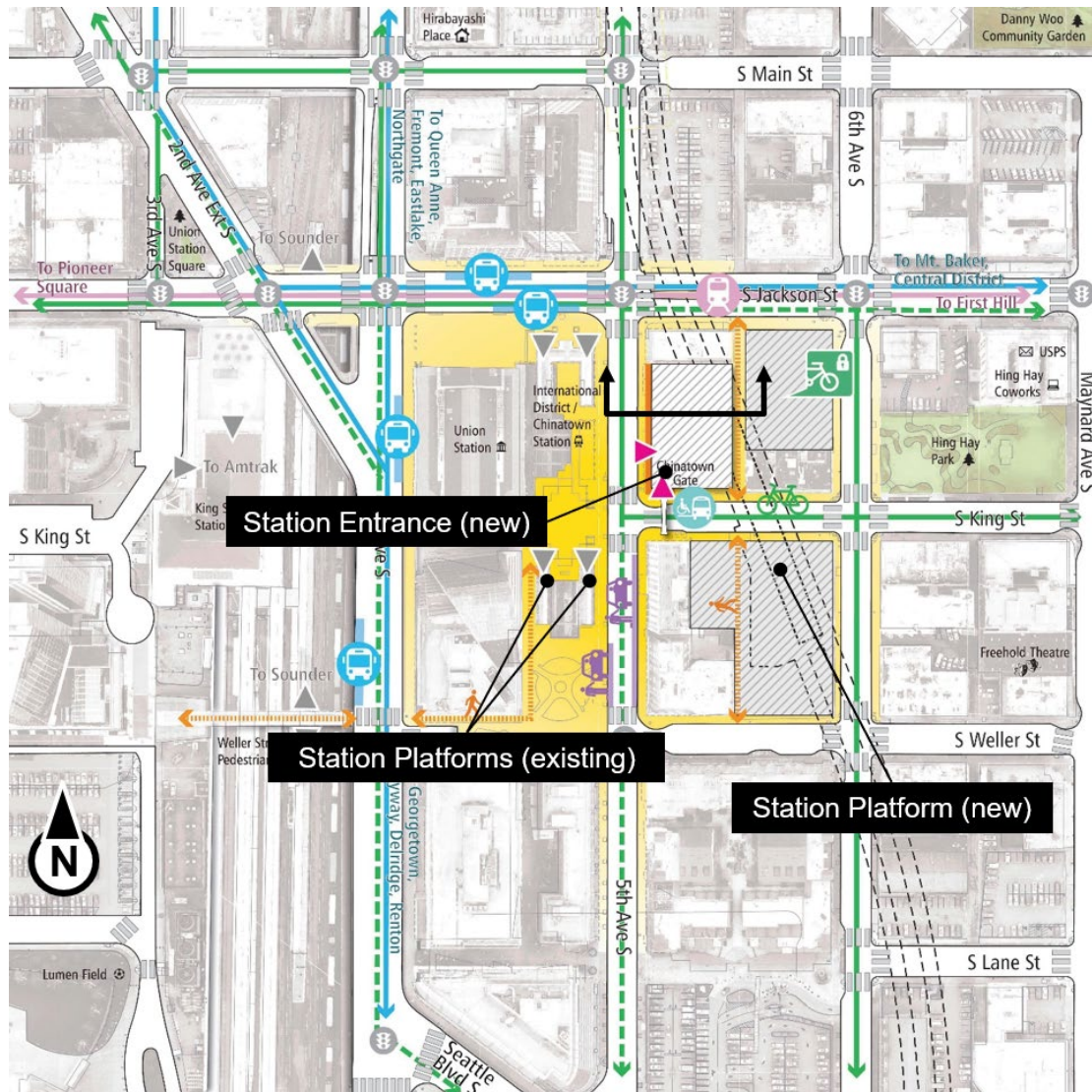
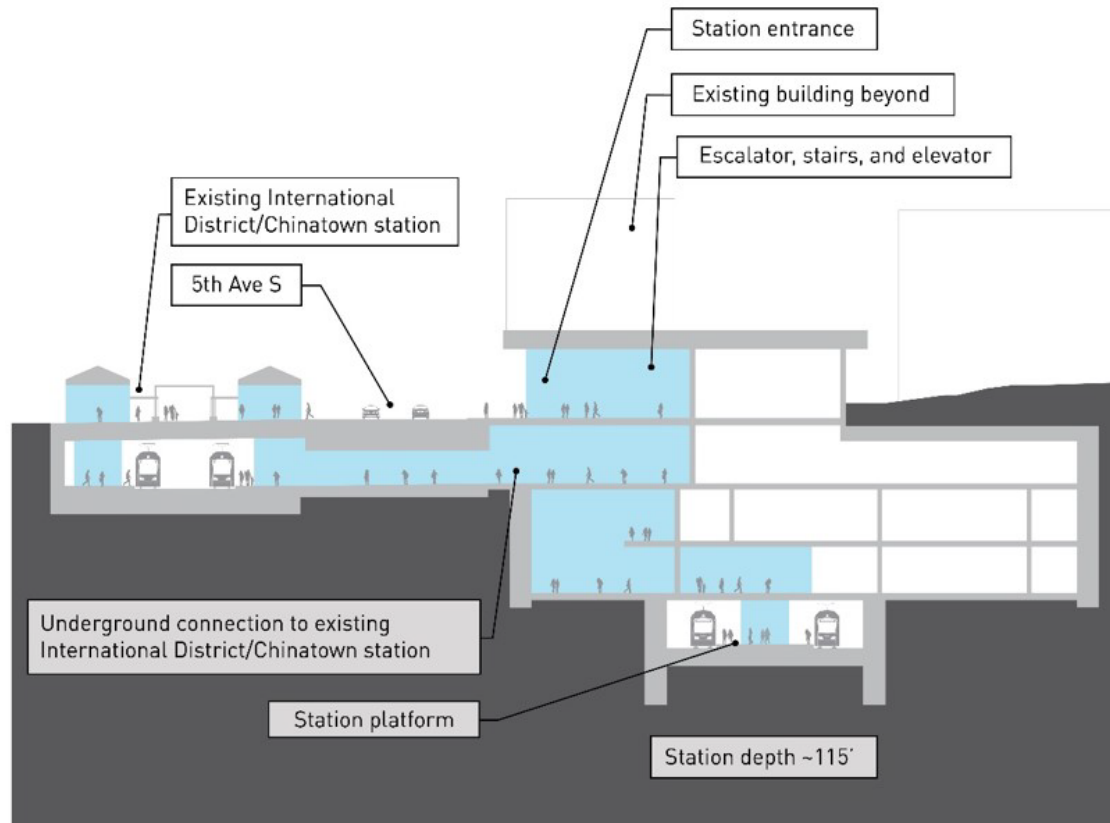


Figure 14. Cross section for 5th Avenue Shallow Diagonal Station Configuration (CID-2a)

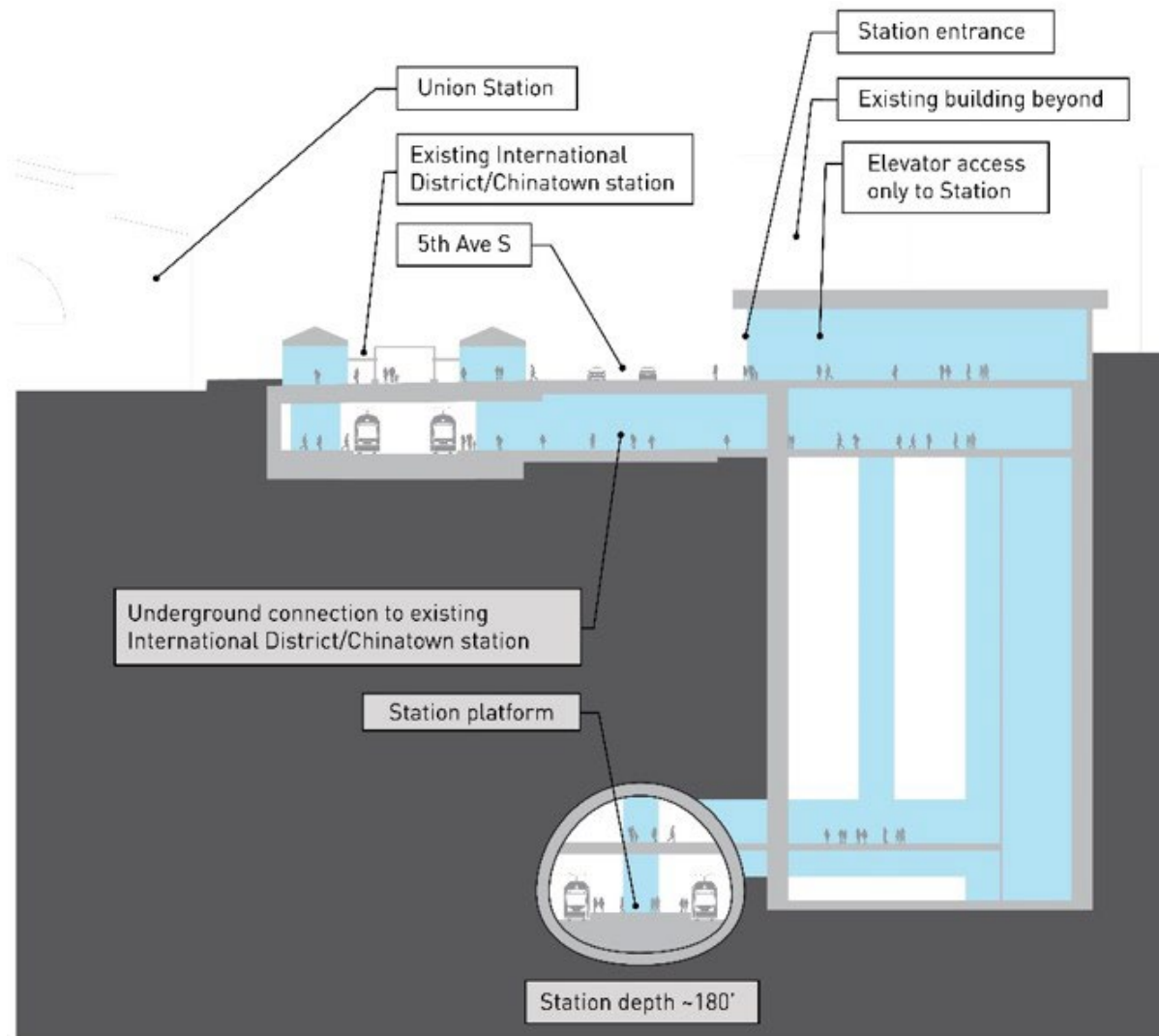


### 5th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-2b)

The 5th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-2b) would be under 5th Avenue South, east of the existing International District/Chinatown Station. The station platform would be approximately 180 feet deep. The deeper station would allow the

station to be mined rather than constructed using cut-and-cover methods and would reduce surface disturbance during construction. There would also be an underground pedestrian connection to the existing northbound International District/Chinatown Station platform. The plan and section for this alternative are shown in Figure 11 and Figure 15, respectively.

Figure 15. Cross section for 5th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-2b)



## 4.4 Evaluation Summary

As developed during the first step of the RET process and refined through ongoing community engagement, the RET outcomes for this station area are to limit harmful impacts of the project and work with impacted communities to identify opportunities to repair past harm, maximize connections for all users, and that the community-shapes decisions that impact them, through self-determination and with a 100-year vision for future generation. This section summarizes the RET evaluation of the data as it relates to these outcomes, focusing on four areas of impacts and benefits: access and transit integration, construction impacts, residential and business displacements and equitable transit-oriented development potential, and parking. The following text defines these focus areas and summarizes high-level findings, with additional details provided in the following sections.

**Access and transit integration:** Evaluates how connections between and among different modes of travel work for different users. This relates primarily to the outcome of maximizing connections for all users, but also may relate to a 100-year vision for future generations. We look to the community to drive and shape that 100-year vision and determine how these and other factors might contribute.

- *Shallow station options offer multiple ways such as stairs, escalators and elevators to get to and from the platform, while deep stations require elevators to access the tunnels, similar to Beacon Hill Station on the existing Link 1 Line.*
- *The 4th Avenue alternatives allow for quicker transfers to bus routes serving Georgetown and to existing access points to Sounder and Amtrak at King Street Station. While these alternatives are close to riders coming from Pioneer Square and the Waterfront, entrances are oriented more to approaches from the south, along Weller*

*Street. Transfers to light rail, other buses, and the streetcar are farther away.*

- *The 4th Avenue alternatives may present an opportunity to restore Union Station to its function as a transit hub with ancillary services and amenities serving the community.*
- *The 5th Avenue alternatives allow for quicker transfers between light rail lines, the streetcar, and bus routes serving Beacon Hill, Little Saigon, and the Central District. Entrances are oriented more to approaches along Jackson and King Streets, which align well with principal walk access routes to Pioneer Square and the Waterfront. Transfers to Sounder and Amtrak at King Street Station are farther away.*
- *The 5th Avenue alternatives may present an opportunity to activate the current transit hub in the CID station area at the street level and allow for more community-focused uses of the historic Union Station.*

**Construction impacts:** Though temporary, construction has the potential to disrupt businesses, residents, travel, and community activities. This area of evaluation relates primarily to the outcome of limiting harmful impacts.

- *Based on assessment to date, the 4th Avenue Shallow station location would take the longest amount of time to construct due, in part, to the time associated with rebuilding the 4th Avenue S viaduct structure associated with the 4th Avenue alternatives.*
- *The 5th Avenue Shallow Diagonal Station Configuration would take the shortest duration to construct and require the least traffic closures and re-routes.*
- *The 4th Avenue alternatives would require full or partial closures of 4th Avenue S, which is a major street that carries about 30,000 daily trips including cars, freight, and buses. Construction of the 4th Avenue alternatives*

would have the greatest amount of traffic diverted to other streets in the area. Because 5th Avenue S carries much lower traffic volumes than 4th Avenue S, the 5th Avenue alternatives would have less traffic diversion, and for a shorter period of time.

- The 5th Avenue Shallow alternative would require temporary relocation of trolley buses from 5th Avenue S to 7th or 8th Avenue S in the C-ID neighborhood.
- The alternatives differ in how they would impact existing high-capacity transit services in the area. The 4th Avenue Shallow station alternative would close Link light rail for 6 to 7 weeks between SODO Station and International District/Chinatown Station and would also temporarily close Stadium Station for up to 2 years. The 4th Avenue alternatives would temporarily disrupt the Seattle streetcar for up to 2 years while the 5th Avenue Shallow alternative would disrupt the streetcar for up to 6 months. The 5th Avenue Deep Station Option and the 5th Avenue Shallow Diagonal Station Configuration would not disrupt the streetcar.

**Residential and business displacements and equitable transit-oriented development potential:** In addition to inconvenience, the construction of light rail stations and guideway in a dense urban environments can displace existing businesses and residents. Federal law requires just compensation and relocation support of individuals displaced directly by construction and permanent operation. However, such displacement could affect cultural integrity and cohesiveness of the community depending on where and how relocation occurs. One potential tool to support cultural integrity and community cohesion is to ensure that new development brought about by the project occur with community ownership, and maximize community benefit. Thus, these areas of evaluation speak to the outcomes of limiting harmful impacts, identifying opportunities to repair past harm, and potentially to a

100-year vision for future generations. Again, we look to the community to drive and shape that 100-year vision and determine how these and other factors might contribute.

- The 5th Avenue South station locations would require some property acquisition east of the street for construction staging and a station entrance, which would result in a higher number of businesses in the C-ID being displaced versus the 4th Avenue South station locations. This would result in more land available after the project is built for equitable transit-oriented development directly associated with the project. Sound Transit would collaborate closely with the community to define and shape future development on any surplus property following construction, or in partnering on joint development.
- The 4th Avenue Shallow alternative is the only alternative that displaces residences in Chinatown-International District.
- Both alternatives can support the community interest to reposition Union Station as an active, community-serving asset, though the 4th Avenue alternatives have a larger physical footprint in the building itself.

**Parking:** The community identified parking as an important community asset, so this area of evaluation is associated with limiting harmful impacts and maximizing connections for all users.

- The 5th Avenue alternatives have more temporary on-street parking impacts, while the 4th Avenue alternatives have more permanent off-street parking impacts.

These four areas of impacts and benefits are described in greater detail below.

## Access and Transit Integration

Of the two alternatives, one is located on 4th Avenue S and one is located on 5th Avenue S. Each location includes a shallow and deep station option. These alternatives differ in terms of station access and passenger transfers from light rail to light rail as well as other modes, including buses, Sounder commuter rail, and Amtrak inter-city rail service.

The 4th Avenue S Shallow Alternative and the 4th Avenue Deep Station Option would have station entries convenient to buses operating northbound on 4th Avenue S, specifically routes serving Georgetown and the Duwamish Industrial District, as well as to Sounder commuter rail and Amtrak. One potential station entry site could integrate with the Weller Street pedestrian bridge, providing a convenient connection to the Sounder platform and relatively direct access to the main entry to King Street Station. This would also connect to the south end of the Pioneer Square neighborhood via King Street, though this path is complicated by a turnaround and driveway serving the new hotel and King Street Station. The 4th Avenue S station location would require a longer walk to bus stops and the Streetcar stop on S Jackson Street, as well as to transfer to the Line 2/3 service to Everett, West Seattle, and Redmond.

The 5th Avenue S Shallow alternative as well as the diagonal station configuration and the 5th Avenue Deep Station Option would utilize existing station entries in the Union Station plaza, as well as an entrance on the east side of 5th Avenue S. The station entrance orients to S King St and S Jackson St, which serve as

the primary walking connections to Pioneer Square and Chinatown-International District, respectively. Entries would also be nearer to buses operating on S Jackson Street, specifically routes serving Little Saigon, Beacon Hill, and the Central District, and in the case of the shallower station alternative would provide easier light rail to light rail transfers. The 5th Avenue S alternatives would be located further from Sounder and Amtrak, along with buses operating on 4th Avenue S, and thus require slightly longer transfer times between the Link 1 Line light rail and Sounder and Amtrak rail transit service.

Both the 4th Avenue Deep Station Option and 5th Avenue Deep Station Option would be limited to elevator access only between the upper concourse to the lower concourse, resulting in less convenient access for passengers entering and exiting the station or transferring. The 4th Avenue Deep Station Option would have a longer transfer time to existing light rail lines compared to the 4th Avenue Shallow Alternative. The 5th Avenue Deep Station Option would also have a longer transfer time to existing light rail lines compared to the 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative and the diagonal station configuration. Note that the 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative would have a shorter transfer time than the diagonal configuration.

Table 1 below summarizes the approximate travel time in minutes between the new Link station, King Street Station and the existing International District/Chinatown Station for each alternative based on existing or currently planned routes.

Table 1. Travel time between new Link Station and existing stations for each Chinatown-International District alternative based on existing or currently planned routes

Alternative	King Street Station (Amtrak/Sounder) to new Link station (minutes)	Existing International District/Chinatown Station to new Link station (minutes)
4th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-1a)	4	3
4th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-1b)	5	4
5th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-2a)	7	2
5th Avenue Shallow Diagonal Station Configuration (CID-2a)	8	4
5th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-2b)	8	5

## Construction Impacts

The station and alignment alternatives present varying degrees of potential construction impacts. The 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative, 5th Avenue Shallow Diagonal Station Configuration, and 5th Avenue Deep Station Option all call for station entrances on 5th Avenue S and S King Street and would require Sound Transit to acquire properties between 5th Avenue S and 6th Avenue S with full and partial road closures on 5th Avenue expected for one to three-and-a-quarter years, depending on alternative or option. The 4th Avenue Shallow Alternative and 4th Avenue Deep Station Option would have major, longer-term impacts to regional transportation with full and partial closures of 4th Avenue S for a period of approximately six to eight-and-a-half years.

As described in more detail below, preliminary assessments of construction durations suggest that the construction impacts of

the 5th Avenue Shallow Diagonal Station Configuration and the 5th Avenue Deep Station Option alternatives would occur over a shorter period of time overall than the 4th Avenue alternatives. This is due, in part, to the time associated with rebuilding the 4th Avenue S viaduct structure associated with the 4th Avenue alternatives. The 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative could take 1.5 years longer than the other 5th Avenue alternatives due to the advanced major utility and utility corridor relocations under 5th Avenue needed for the 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative station construction.

Below is a summary of the geographic extent of potential construction impacts in the C-ID and durations for each of the alternatives. It should be noted that the estimates below are preliminary and are prepared for alternative comparison purposes only. These estimates are based on limited design and construction sequence analysis work completed to date and may be refined in the future.

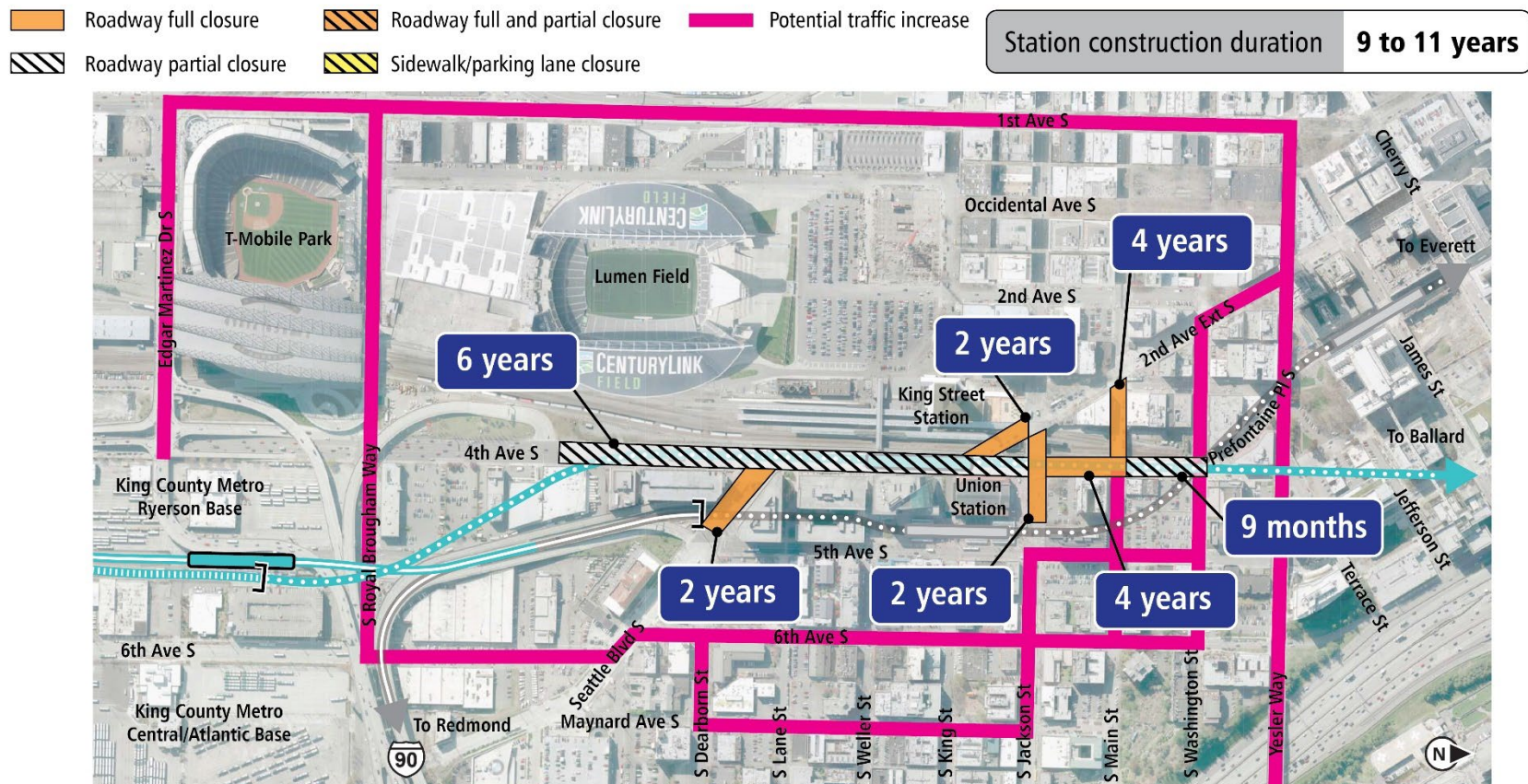


The **4th Avenue Shallow Alternative** would result in partial roadway closure extending for approximately 2,700 feet along 4th Avenue S from the beginning of the viaduct structure south of Seattle Boulevard S to south of Yesler Way (Figure 16).

- Overall construction duration would be 9–11 years.
- The partial closure of 4th Avenue S would detour approximately 15,000 average daily vehicles for

approximately 6 years. In addition, 4th Avenue S would be fully closed between S. Jackson Street to Main Street for approximately 4 years for cut and cover construction and tunnel machine extraction. Vehicle access to the adjacent Union Station underground parking garage from 4th Avenue would be restricted during some phases of construction.

Figure 16. Construction roadway closures and potential detour routes for 4th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-1a)



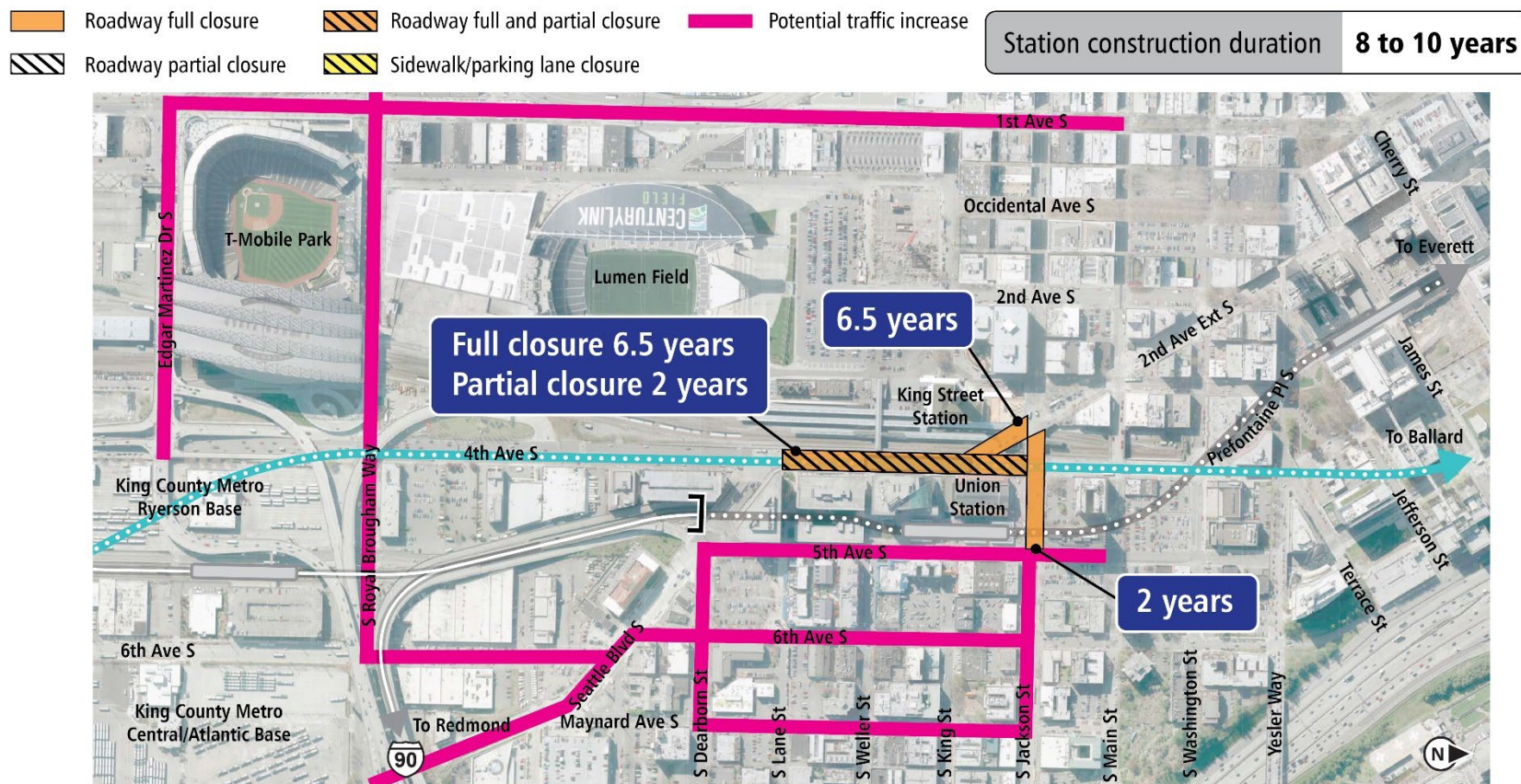


The **4th Avenue Deep Station Option** would limit the extent of street disruption on 4th Avenue S to approximately 900 feet from Seattle Boulevard S. to S. Jackson Street (Figure 17).

- Overall station construction duration would be 8 – 10 years.

- The period of greatest disruption, requiring full closure of 4th Avenue S, would detour approximately 30,000 vehicles per day for approximately 6.5 years. In addition, this portion of the roadway would also be partially closed for 2 years.

Figure 17. Construction roadway closures and potential detour routes for 4th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-1b)

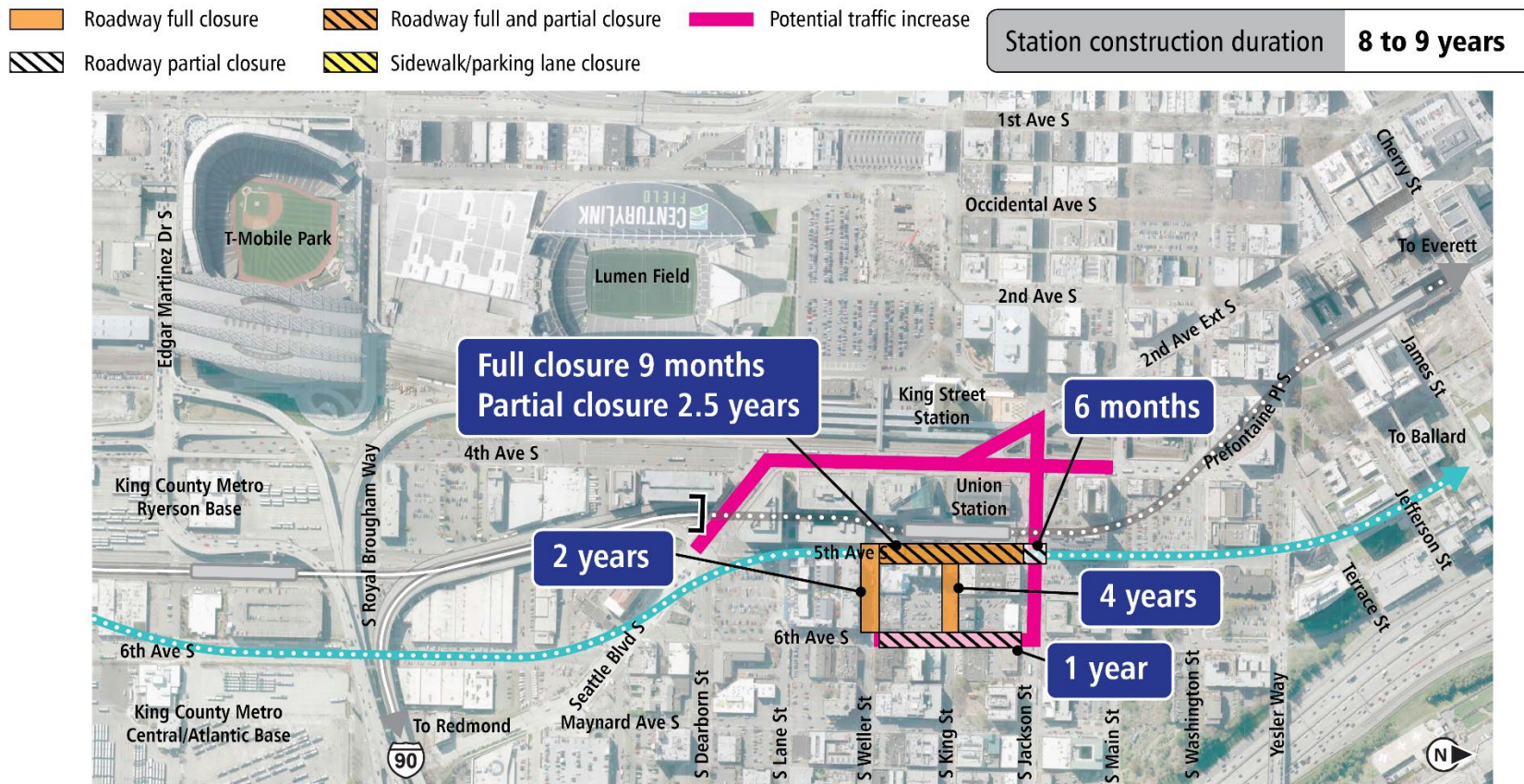




The **5th Avenue Shallow Alternative** would generally limit the area of impact to the station box only (Figure 18). Surface street disruption associated with station construction would extend for approximately 500 feet along 5th Avenue S between approximately S Jackson Street and south of S Weller Street. Additional surface disruption would be associated with the adjacent off-street station entrance construction area and staging site discussed below.

- Overall station construction duration would be 8 to 9 years *which includes advance utility relocation work*. The periods of greatest disruption would be during a 9-month period when 5th Avenue S would be closed to traffic to facilitate phasing of underground station construction and traffic would be detoured to other parallel streets (currently 5th Avenue S is used by 5,000 daily vehicles). In addition, 5th Avenue S. would be partially closed for about 2.5 years.

Figure 18. Construction roadway closures and potential detour routes for 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-2a)





- The **diagonal station configuration** of the 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative (Figure 19) would also limit the area of impact to the station box only; however, it would avoid full closure of 5th Avenue S and would not affect the intersection of 5th Avenue S and S Jackson Street. 5th

Avenue S would be partially closed between S. Jackson Street and S. King Street for about one year to construct the underground pedestrian connection from the new station to the existing northbound International District/Chinatown Station platform. Overall station construction duration for the diagonal configuration would be 5 to 6 years.

Figure 19. Construction roadway closures and potential detour routes for 5th Avenue Shallow Diagonal Station Configuration (CID-2a)



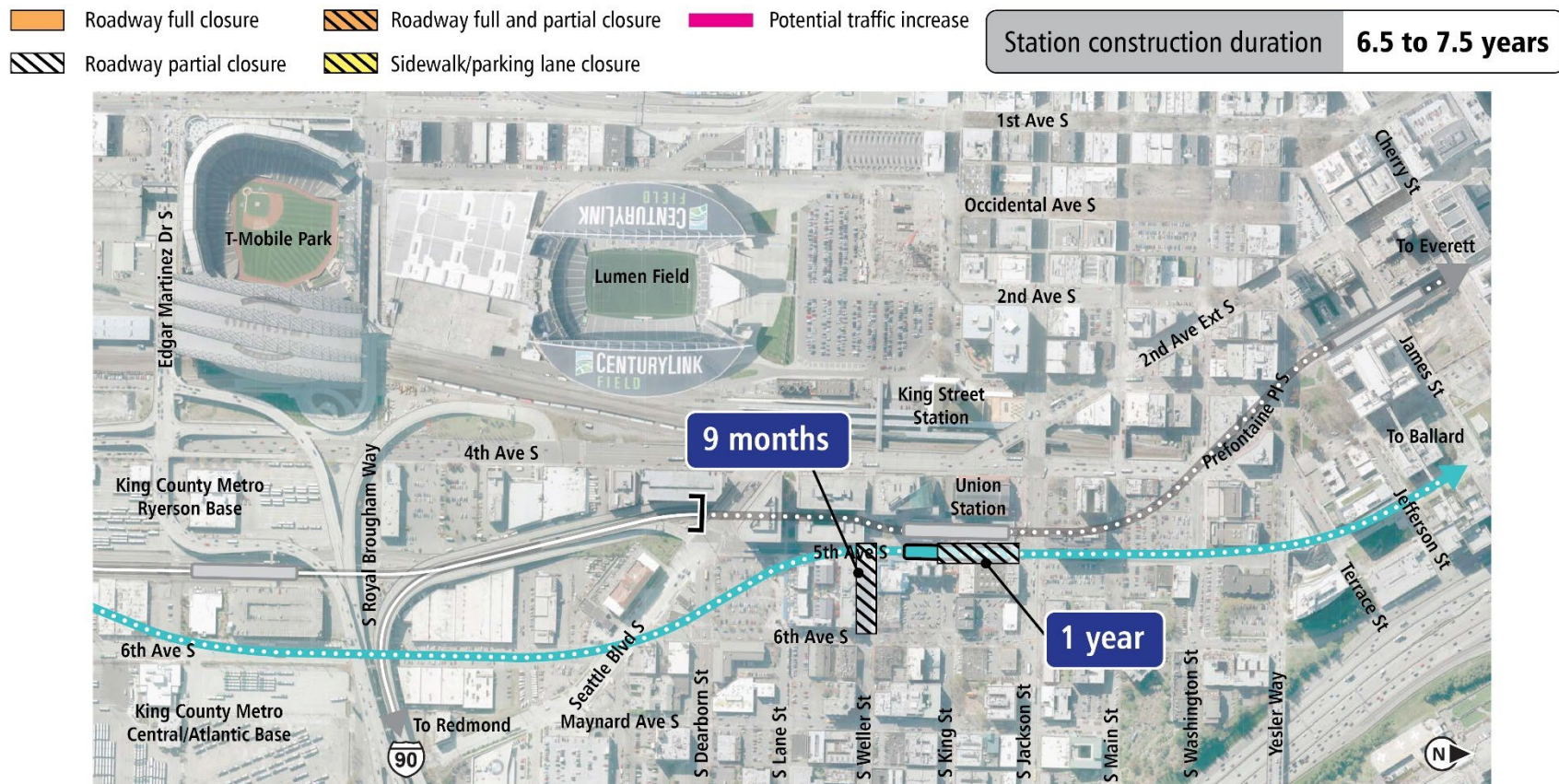


The **5th Avenue Deep Station Option** would result in the least surface disruption, limited to an off-street station entrance construction and staging site which would also serve as the location of a future station entrance and potential development (discussed below) (Figure 20).

- Overall station construction duration would be 6.5 – 7.5 years.

- The period of greatest disruption (for station construction shaft excavation) would be for 2 – 2.5 years. 5th Avenue S would be partially closed between S. Jackson Street and S. King Street for approximately one year to construct the underground pedestrian connection from the new station to the existing International District/Chinatown Station.

Figure 20. Construction roadway closures and potential detour routes for 5th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-2b)



## Residential and Business Displacements and Potential for Equitable Transit Oriented Development

To build the WSBLE project, Sound Transit will need to acquire or otherwise assume use of private property, including businesses and residences. Once construction is complete, the properties used for construction staging would be available to be developed as equitable Transit Oriented Development (eTOD) as shaped and defined by the community. However, it is important to note that the potential for eTOD comes as a direct result of permanent impacts to residents and business owners displaced for project

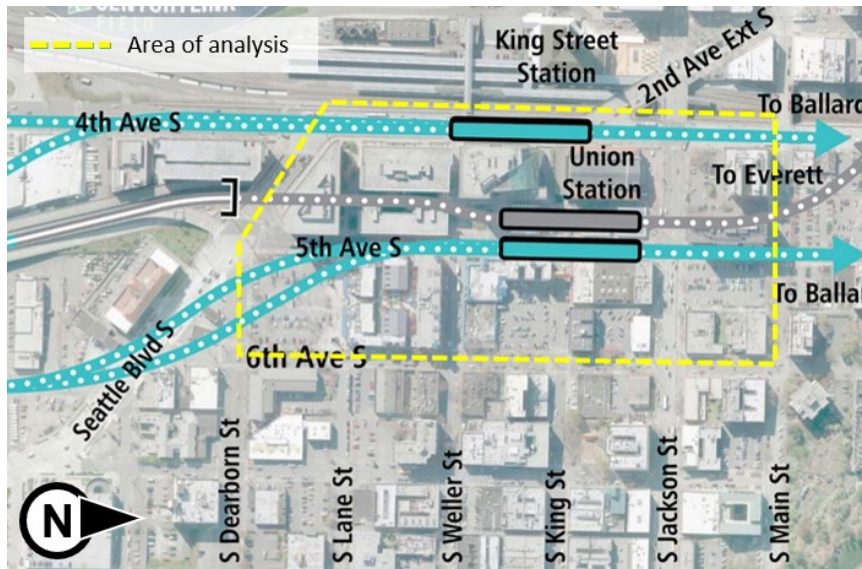
construction and operation, as Sound Transit cannot acquire property solely for the purpose of TOD.

Table 2 displays the number of residential and business displacements as well as equitable development potential for each alternative, based on current zoning. To provide a comparative analysis between development potential and displacements, the analysis was limited to an area in proximity to the station which does not include displacements associated with each alternative outside of the station area. Figure 21 shows the extents of the area used for the comparative analysis.

Table 2. Displacements and equitable development potential for each alternative in the Chinatown-International District station area

Alternative/Option	Displacements		Equitable Development Potential	
	Residential displacements (units) Permanent / (Temporary)	Business displacements Permanent / (Temporary)	Potential new residential units	Potential new commercial space (gross square feet)
4th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-1a)	120 / (0)	0 / (0)	0	0
4th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-1b)	0 / (0)	0 / (0)	0	0
5th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-2a)	0 / (0)	13 / (0)	360	26,000
5th Avenue Shallow Diagonal Station Configuration (CID-2a)	0 / (0)	13 / (8)	360	26,000
5th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-2b)	0 / (0)	13 / (0)	360	26,000

Figure 21. Area of analysis for displacements and equitable development potential for the Chinatown-International District station area



All alternatives are located in areas of high displacement risk based on the City of Seattle's Growth and Equity Analysis, Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan, 2015. Of the Draft EIS alternatives and station options evaluated, only 4th Avenue Shallow Alternative would have direct residential displacements. These displacements would occur at the ICON apartments due to loss of access during construction. While these displacements are considered long-term impact, the building would remain and could be used for housing following construction. The 4th Avenue Deep Station Option would have the most employee displacements, primarily due to the displacement of the Metro Ryerson Base.

The amount of potential business displacements is similar for 5th Avenue alternative and station options. Business displacements would occur primarily in the C-ID station area and would be

associated with the construction staging site adjacent to the station. The 5th Shallow Diagonal Configuration would require temporary displacement of businesses for less than a year in the American Hotel building and the Buty Building while structural improvements are made to these buildings. The Chief Seattle Club Eagle Village pilot modular housing shelter is expected to have moved prior to construction of the project, but if not, the 5th Avenue alternatives would displace the shelter, and residents would be relocated. Although the extent of displacement is relatively low compared to other segments, the higher proportion of communities of color and low-income residents in this area increases the potential for impacts to businesses important to these populations and to community cohesion.

For the 5th Avenue shallow alternative and deep station option as well as the 4th Avenue deep station option, additional displacements would occur near the tunnel portal area in the vicinity of S. Massachusetts Street.

Because all alternatives are located in areas of high displacement risk, concerns about gentrification and displacement remain high in the C-ID station area. Once displaced, there is no guarantee that residents and businesses would be relocated in the neighborhood, meaning the demographic composition of the neighborhood could be forever changed.



### What is a displacement?

In the context of the WSBLE Draft EIS evaluation, “displacement” refers to the need for Sound Transit to acquire or otherwise assume use of private property in order to construct the project, which may permanently change the ownership of the site. This can also be referred to as a **direct displacement**.

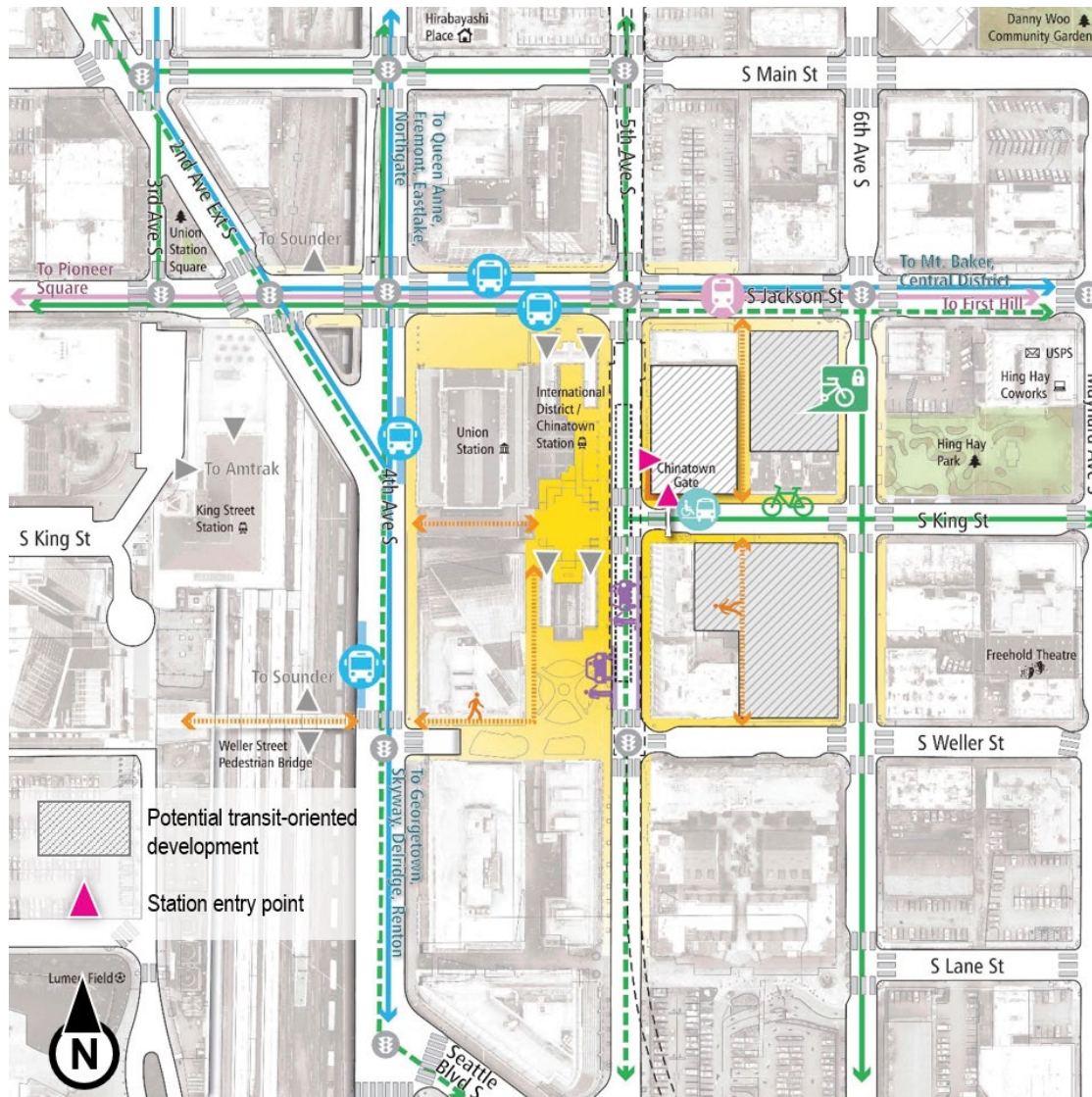
**Indirect displacement** refers to displacement that can occur as a result of gentrification or other factors related to the development of new infrastructure, such as a new transit station or line. Examples of indirect displacement include economic and cultural displacement.

- **Economic displacement** occurs when a household is compelled to relocate due to the economic pressures of increased housing costs or other costs of living.
- **Cultural displacement** occurs when people choose to move because their neighbors and culturally related businesses and institutions have left the area. For communities of color, immigrants, and refugees, social cohesion can often play a bigger role in location decisions than for other populations, and social networks within racial and ethnic communities may take on a greater importance than for other populations. Measuring cultural displacement is difficult since no systematic survey of households exists that asks why they have chosen to relocate. However, some indicators of cultural displacement can be measured at the neighborhood scale.

While Sound Transit cannot ensure that the demographic profile of the neighborhood remains intact, property acquired by Sound Transit to support construction of the new station could be developed in a manner consistent with Sound Transit’s Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (eTOD) Policy and shaped by inclusive and ongoing community engagement. The eTOD Policy directs Sound Transit to consider transit-oriented development potential early in project development and authorizes the agency to pursue opportunities for integrated TOD with station design and delivery, along with working with communities on strategies to minimize displacement. It prioritizes affordable housing as a use on property that Sound Transit acquires in full for the project, and supports the inclusion of retail, offices, and community spaces that contribute to creating vibrant neighborhoods connected by transit.

The 5th Avenue station location has the potential for development of the most units of eTOD, as some property acquisition east of the street for construction staging and a station entrance would be required, as described above. It is estimated that over 300 integrated affordable and mixed-income housing units, and up to 26,000 square feet of active ground floor space, above and around the station entry could be developed. Figure 22 displays the approximate location and configuration of the station and associated potential equitable development areas for the 5th Avenue Station alternatives.

Figure 22. Potential equitable Transit-oriented development areas for 5th Avenue Station alternatives (CID-2a, CID-2b)





The 4th Avenue South station location would involve construction and station entries in the right-of-way, and staging farther south of the station area closer to the Stadiums in SODO. As a result, there would be fewer direct displacements within the C-ID station area and less property potentially available to be developed in a manner consistent with Sound Transit's eTOD Policy.

## Parking

All the Chinatown-International District alternatives and options would permanently remove public parking spaces both off-street and on-street. The 4th Shallow Station alternative and the 4th Deep Station option would remove about 200 off-street public

stalls from the private parking garage under Union Station near 4th Avenue South. The 5th Avenue Shallow Alternative and diagonal station configuration as well as the 5th Avenue Deep Station Option would remove 80 public off-street stalls from a surface lot.

Table 3 below shows number of on-street and off-street parking spaces that would be permanently or temporarily displaced near the Chinatown/International District Station between S. Royal Brougham Way and James Street. Sound Transit would coordinate with the Seattle Department of Transportation on measures to address temporary parking loss during construction.

*Table 3. Number of on and off-street parking spaces permanently and temporarily displaced in each CID alternative*

Alternative/Option	On-street parking permanently removed (spaces)	Off-street public parking permanently removed (stalls)	On-street parking temporarily removed during construction (spaces)
4th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-1a)	10-20	200	0
4th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-1b)	10-20	200	0
5th Avenue Shallow Alternative (CID-2a)	15-20	80	55-85
5th Avenue Shallow Diagonal Station Configuration (CID-2a)	15-20	80	20-30
5th Avenue Deep Station Option (CID-2b)	15-20	80	15-25

## 4.5 Community Engagement

### Community Engagement Approach

Interviews with social service providers and community organizations helped Sound Transit better understand the environmental justice populations within the Ballard Link Extension study area. Project materials for targeted outreach efforts were translated into Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), as well as Vietnamese and Spanish.

As previously discussed, the Chinatown-International District station area contains a higher percentage of minority and lower income people living in geographic proximity to the project than any other part of the study area. The percentage of communities of color that live in the Chinatown-International District is 20 percent higher than in the Sound Transit Service District and the percentage of low-income residents in the Chinatown-International District is 23 percent higher than in the Sound Transit Service District. This demographic understanding together with feedback from social service providers and community organizations has shaped Sound Transit's community engagement approach for this area and has resulted in more intentional engagement events to residents and businesses in the Chinatown-International District station area.

Community engagement events that targeted the Chinatown-International District station area included the following activities:

- Conducting interviews with social service providers and community organizations to better understand populations in the study area, including how communities of color and low-income populations might relate to the project.
- Utilizing interpreters at public meetings and community gatherings.
- Translating key materials into languages spoken in the station area, including simplified Chinese, traditional Chinese, and Vietnamese.
- Holding smaller meetings focused on individual communities or organizations.
- Attending community organization board meetings.
- Rotating a project kiosk around public gathering spaces in the neighborhood with panels in English, Chinese, and Vietnamese.
- Meeting communities where they gather, like fairs and festivals, community events or meetings, or in organized online spaces.
- Hosting listening sessions with residents during existing resident meetings, with presentations and facilitated discussion with translation, as well as evening meals provided.
- Holding a community workshop focused on the Chinatown-International District station area, shaped with community input and including presentation, discussion, and report-out opportunities in Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and English, and with refreshments provided.
- Conducting door-to-door business outreach and providing translated notifications and project-related materials to increase project and process awareness, build relationships, gather feedback, and answer questions.
- Partnering with the City of Seattle's DON Community liaisons to build capacity and awareness in communities about the project and engage communities in the Draft EIS comment period.

## Community Input

Community perspectives and feedback are critical in understanding how the proposed alternatives would benefit and/or burden communities around the C-ID Station. The following includes key themes from conversations with the community during outreach and community engagement activities, particularly engagement with social service providers and community-based organizations in the area. This section will be updated in the final report after we receive additional feedback from the community during the Draft EIS comment period.

- Community members shared that past public projects have been “done to the community rather than for the community.” It is clear how important ongoing, meaningful and inclusive public engagement is through all phases of any capital project, with specific suggestions to be mindful of language barriers, culturally responsive, center racial equity considerations and share project information early.
- Construction impacts are a top concern. In particular, many shared concerns about construction impacts along 5th Avenue S and that it is critical that there be minimal impact on Chinatown business operations during all phases of the construction. The community has experienced worsening traffic over the past several years on 5th and 6th avenues, and there needs to be a balance between construction impacts on traffic and impacts on the neighborhood.
- There is strong interest from the CID and Pioneer Square communities for leveraging a new station to: 1) improve connections between transit modes and between the CID and Pioneer Square neighborhoods, 2) activate Union Station and 3) improve the existing Chinatown/International District station and plaza. Ideas like including retail and concessions to support activation of the area have been shared often.
- Some have shared strong feedback that aligning the existing “International District/Chinatown” station name in accordance with City Council Ordinance 119297 is “extremely important to the Chinese community for identity, cultural, historic and local economic marketing reasons” and is “confusing for visitors.”
- Many shared that Sound Transit should explore alternatives with stations at 4th and 5th Avenues to determine which would best serve the neighborhood. Community members also noted that Sound Transit should coordinate with the City of Seattle to better understand the lifespan of the 4th Avenue viaduct and that if there is a need to replace the structure, determine whether it is possible to align the projects, so as not to burden the community twice unnecessarily.
- Many emphasized the importance of easy passenger transfers, particularly for the elderly and those with more limited mobility. The shallow station options appear more strongly favored for that reason.
- Some community members have also expressed that they need to know how to use the light rail since their primary method of transportation is currently the Metro bus, which is familiar and has a live person available to answer questions and provide guidance. Others noted that community members that live outside of the neighborhood often take public transit to commute into the neighborhood (e.g., Metro buses, light rail, streetcar) for culturally responsive services, to go shopping, visit with family or attend community events and that taking light rail to the airport is the most common use within the community.

- Many have shared strong concerns about displacement impacts in the CID, both direct and more immediate as well as long-term and indirect such as economic and cultural displacements in the CID. Additionally, many expressed interest in cross-agency coordination and convening with community, focused on understanding and addressing these issues. There has been some interest in understanding future transit-oriented development potential near the stations in partnership with the community, particularly to increase affordable housing while including retail on the ground floor.
- With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, community-based organizations have shared that they have shifted and adapted services to be responsive to impacts of the pandemic. Many shared renewed concern over the future of small businesses and the Chinatown-International District and Pioneer Square districts' economic vibrancy and vitality, as well as increased concern over a sense of safety, particularly with the rise in anti-Asian violence.

#### 4.6 Chinatown-International District Station Summary

Based on the Draft EIS results and community feedback so far, it is unclear which alternative(s) would pose the greatest net benefit for the unique, multicultural communities that live and work in the surrounding south downtown neighborhoods. During the alternatives development phase of the project, community members posed a number of questions throughout the engagement process that have started to shed more light on these issues and will continue to do so during future phases. Those questions and progress towards responding to those questions are included below:

- **These neighborhoods have endured numerous major construction projects. Are there opportunities to align building the new C-ID Station with other major construction projects to minimize impacts?** In 2020 and 2021, the City of Seattle, Sound Transit, other partner agencies and some community stakeholders gathered for a series of workshops to begin deeper collaboration and coordination around future major construction projects in the C-ID station area, in an area some call the Jackson Hub. Beyond developing an inventory of planned projects in the area, these workshops also included an overview of past community planning efforts and surveys to begin to shed light on opportunities to collectively repair past harms, maximize connections and begin to understand how the WSBLE project in coordination with other major projects in the C-ID station area could contribute to a community defined 100-year vision. This work will need to grow and expand in future phases and be shaped by community.
- **Are there opportunities to engage in third-party partnerships to maximize the benefits of Sound Transit investment in the new station and any agency TOD that results from this project, whether it be looking for opportunities to support vulnerable small businesses that may be displaced by the project or supporting community visioning around public realm improvements.** Both the City of Seattle and Sound Transit are planning early and building community relationships that can be built upon if agency TOD does result from this project.
- **Are there differences among the alternatives in terms of potential for indirect displacement of communities of color and low-income communities? What role can cross-agency coordination play in addressing short-term, direct**

**and long-term indirect displacements?**

This will continue to be an area of focus for future phases.

Continued meaningful engagement with the community, building on the foundation during the alternatives development and Draft EIS phases will be important to continue to understand how to maximize the potential benefit and minimize burdens of the WSBLE project in the Final EIS project phase.



## 5 DELRIDGE STATION EVALUATION

### 5.1 Neighborhood Context and Overview

The Delridge station would be in the North Delridge area, specifically in the eastern section of the Youngstown neighborhood. The station area is defined by a blended 10-minute walkshed from each of the Draft EIS Alternatives. This geography is characterized by a mix of land uses of highly differentiated scales on successive blocks, ranging from the massive industrial footprint of Nucor Steel and large-floorplate commercial and office around SW Andover Street to small-lot, one-story single family homes between SW Dakota and SW Genesee Streets.

Much of the land within the station area is currently zoned single family (41%), with significant areas zoned low-rise (25%), industrial (13%), and parks/open space (13%).

The Delridge neighborhood possesses rich community and cultural assets clustered around SW Genesee Street, including the Youngstown Cultural Arts Center and Delridge Community Center. These places function as community hubs, integrating the neighborhood's arts and nature-based identity. Notable ecological and topographic features help to define the edges of the neighborhood. To the west, Longfellow Creek separates the eastern two blocks of the Youngstown neighborhood from the rest, with only two full-service bridges spanning it. To the east, Pigeon Point rises sharply between Delridge Way SW and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue SW, with one hill climb on SW Genesee Street and few ADA-compliant sidewalks negotiating the steep grade.

In the last ten years, one multifamily apartment building has been constructed (the 195-unit Youngstown Flats) in the station area, in a block with commercial zoning. Median asking rents have

increased by 57% over the past 10 years compared to a citywide average of 34%, though this figure is skewed by the effect of the new Youngstown Flats development on otherwise limited supply of rental residential stock in the neighborhood. Most new development in the station area has been in the form of for-sale residential townhomes, with average sale values nearing \$600,000 as of August 2018. This represents a 120% increase in median home value within the preceding 5 years.

In 2018, the City of Seattle published the North Delridge Action Plan that highlighted health and equity concerns in the neighborhood. The study area for the plan included five blocks on either side of Delridge Way SW from the West Seattle Bridge to SW Elmgrove Street. The Plan outlined six priority areas based on a Healthy Living Assessment (HLA). The HLA observed data including census, food access, transportation, goods and services, recreation, economic opportunities, and access to affordable housing to identify existing assets and services as well as gaps in the health-supportive infrastructure:

- None of the Delridge planning area is within a half mile of a grocery store that accepts Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), called Basic Food in Washington, which provides monthly benefits to low income people to buy food.
- Fewer people ride a bicycle, walk or take transit than the City as a whole (20% compared to 32%). About half of the (52%) road network has sidewalks on both sides.
- Eight of the eleven neighborhood services considered to be supportive of a complete neighborhood (e.g., childcare, library and schools) are present, but only five of the thirteen shops (e.g., banks, pharmacy, food stores) are available.
- Delridge has many parks and recreation resources and 24% of the Delridge Health Reporting Area (HRA) are

children 17 and younger, but only 42% of the area is within ¼ mile of a playground.

- Unemployment was higher than Seattle as a whole (9.4% versus 6.3%).
- Fewer Delridge residents have at least a bachelor's degree than citywide (37% versus 55% citywide).

Analytical work performed by the RET Collaborative during the alternatives development phase indicated the Delridge Station as a potential area of focus with respect to racial equity outcomes. While the immediate vicinity of the station area has a relatively low non-white share of the population (28%), the station would serve as a major transfer for high capacity bus service on the Delridge Way corridor. This service, which will include the future RapidRide H line, will connect large communities of color residing several miles away in South Delridge and White Center into the Link Light Rail system. The station would also be the closest high capacity transit station to South Seattle College, where students of color account for 43% of the enrollment as of the 2019-2020 academic year.<sup>3</sup>

## 5.2 RET Outcomes

The socioeconomic and cultural context of the Delridge corridor reveals why it is a prime area of focus for the Racial Equity Toolkit work on the WSBLE project. Since the initiation of WSBLE project development in 2018, City and Sound Transit staff reviewed past community plans and surveys, had direct conversations with community stakeholders, and reached out to community members in a variety of ways to learn about the potential benefits

and burdens of the project from the perspective of communities of most harmed by racialization in the Delridge corridor. The early research and community feedback yielded two high-level racial equity outcomes to achieve in delivering the WSBLE project in the neighborhood. This section introduces each outcome, along with how it connects to the history and future of the communities in the Delridge corridor.

***An excellent transfer experience including bus and rail integration and options for RET community-desired amenities provided at the station.*** The intimate geography of Longfellow Creek and Puget Ridge inspired the naming of the neighborhoods known collectively as Delridge, as well as the name of the street spine that acts as the thin ribbon of connectivity between these neighborhoods and the city beyond. This same geography has also served to limit the density of development and services along the corridor, a condition that affects access to opportunity by the diverse communities residing in it. For this reason, the City of Seattle and King County Metro identified the Delridge Corridor as one of the first candidates for expansion of the RapidRide bus rapid transit network. Similarly, the WSBLE project includes a station near Delridge Way to integrate with bus service on the corridor and provide a connection to the regional transit system. The first pillar of racial equity for the WSBLE project in Delridge is to ensure excellent bus and rail integration. This can be measured quantitatively – in terms of decreased travel times and speed of transfers – as well as qualitatively, including what kinds of services, opportunities, and features contribute to a dignified experience of using transit. The [Station Planning Progress Report](#), along with this report, offer evaluations and ideas for enhancing the transfer experience at Delridge.

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<sup>3</sup> South Seattle College Data Dashboard, accessed 1/14/2022  
[https://www.seattlecolleges.edu/administration/institutional-](https://www.seattlecolleges.edu/administration/institutional-effectiveness/strategic-plan-scorecard/data-dashboard)

[effectiveness/strategic-plan-scorecard/data-dashboard](https://www.seattlecolleges.edu/administration/institutional-effectiveness/strategic-plan-scorecard/data-dashboard)

***Equitable transit-oriented development serving the community.***

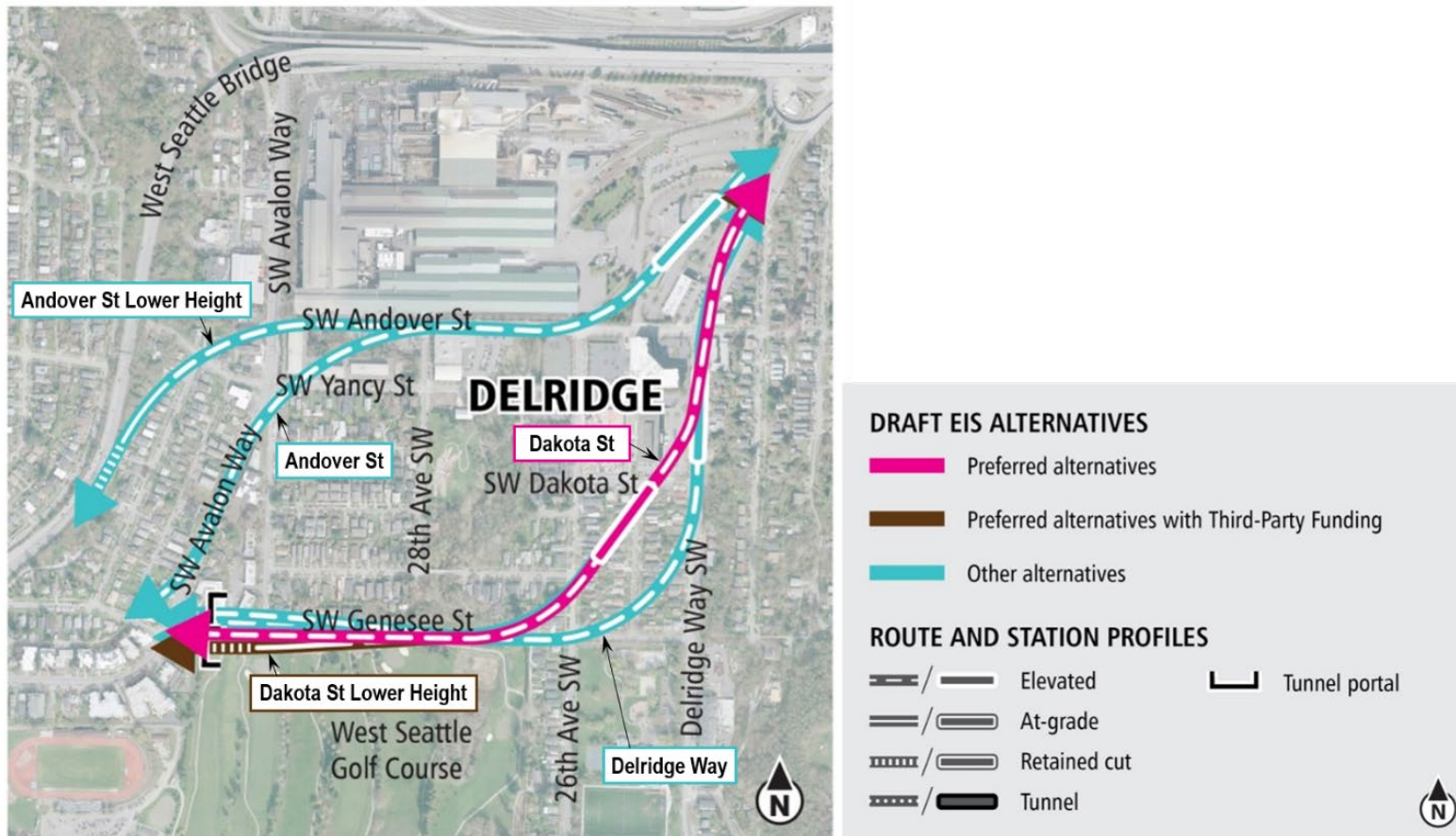
The Delridge Station area has a long history as a commercial and cultural node of activity, owing to its proximity to transportation links off the West Seattle Peninsula, and adjacency to the major industrial facility now known as Nucor Steel. The first transit line to West Seattle, a streetcar, ran on tracks close to the proposed new alignments. This connectivity, and the success of the steel plant, transformed the once rich tide flats on Elliott Bay into the bustling neighborhood of Youngstown, much of which developed under the control of the steel company. As predecessors to Nucor divested their property holdings, the fabric and connection between residents, businesses, and property owners were altered, even though the neighborhood retained its smaller-scale, residential feel. It is thus understandable that the prospect of a new light rail station and new development be viewed as a potentially substantial change to the history and trajectory of the neighborhood. The second pillar of racial equity for Delridge is to ensure that the WSBLE project creates opportunities for equitable, community-directed development that serves the broader Delridge community, particularly communities of color, low income and other vulnerable populations. This can manifest in affordable housing – including opportunities for affordable home ownership – as well as commercial uses and services for nearby residents and neighbors connecting to the station by bus. Food access and places of gathering are particularly desired and valued. These opportunities are defined and evaluated in this report, as well as the [Station Planning Progress Report](#).

## 5.3 Draft EIS Alternatives

### Overview

The Draft EIS is evaluating a broad range of Alternatives for the segment of the WSBLE project that includes a Duwamish crossing and Delridge, Avalon, and Alaska Junction station locations. The alternatives were developed based on community feedback received during the Alternatives Development phase, including recommendations from the WSBLE Stakeholder Advisory Group and Elected Leadership Group. Additional feedback received through Neighborhood Forums and workshops with agency partners helped shape the Alternatives. This process led to the Sound Transit Board identifying Preferred Alternatives and Other Alternatives to be studied in the Draft EIS. These alternatives include multiple station and alignment options located within the North Delridge neighborhood (Figure 23). The Delridge Segment of the project includes the area between Southwest Charlestown Street and 31st Avenue Southwest and one station, the Delridge Station. The Station locations can generally be characterized as being in three different locations with differing guideway and station heights depending on each Alternative's connection to the Avalon Station and West Seattle Junction.

Figure 23. Draft EIS alternatives in the Delridge segment



### Dakota Street Station Alternative (DEL-1a)

In the Dakota Street Station Alternative (DEL-1a), the station would be elevated between Delridge Way Southwest and 26th

Avenue Southwest, south of Southwest Dakota Street, and oriented southwest-northeast. The top of the station structure would be approximately 110 feet high. The plan and section for this alternative are shown in Figure 24 and Figure 25, respectively.



Figure 24. Station site plan for Dakota Street Station Alternative (DEL-1a)

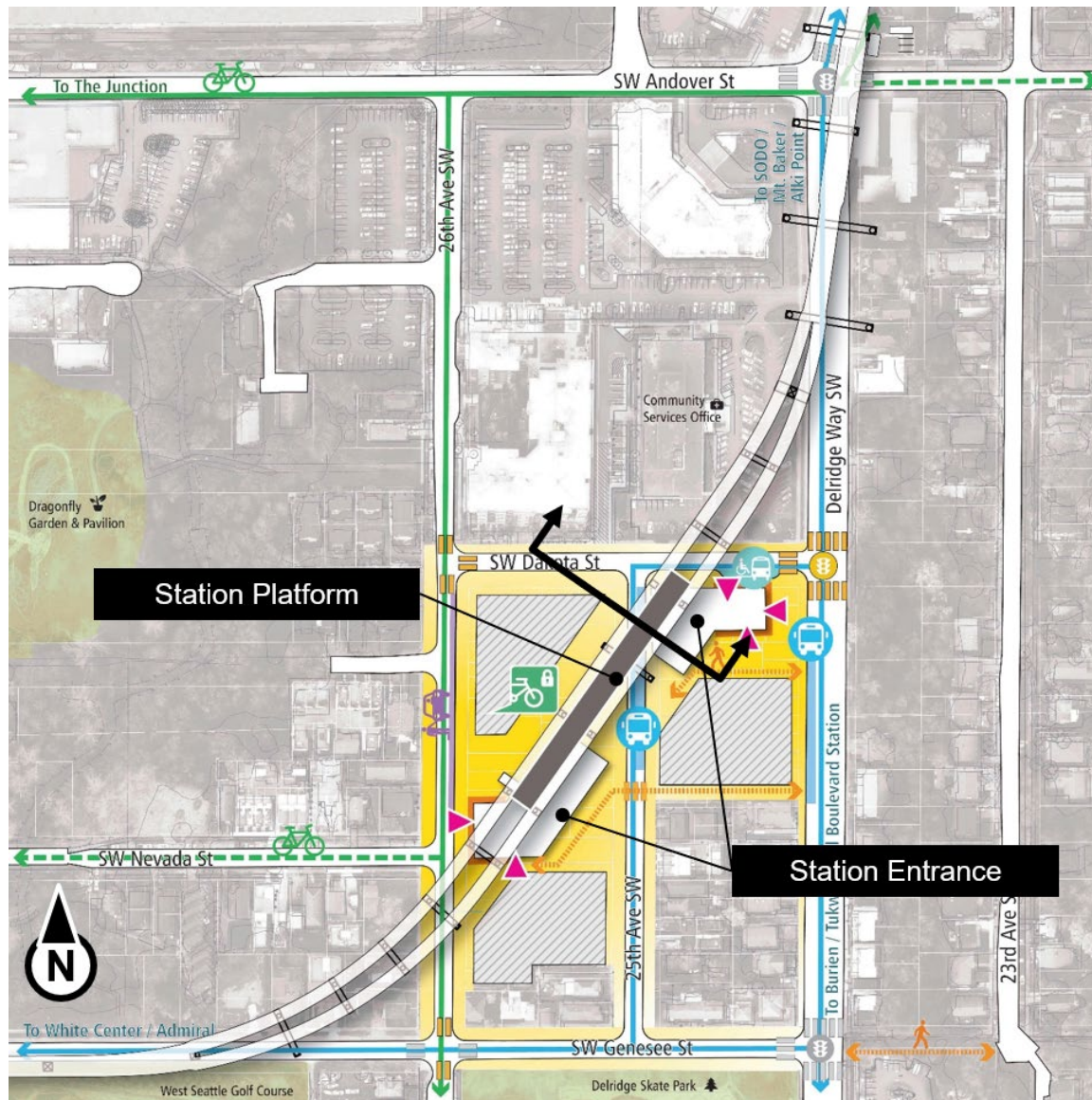
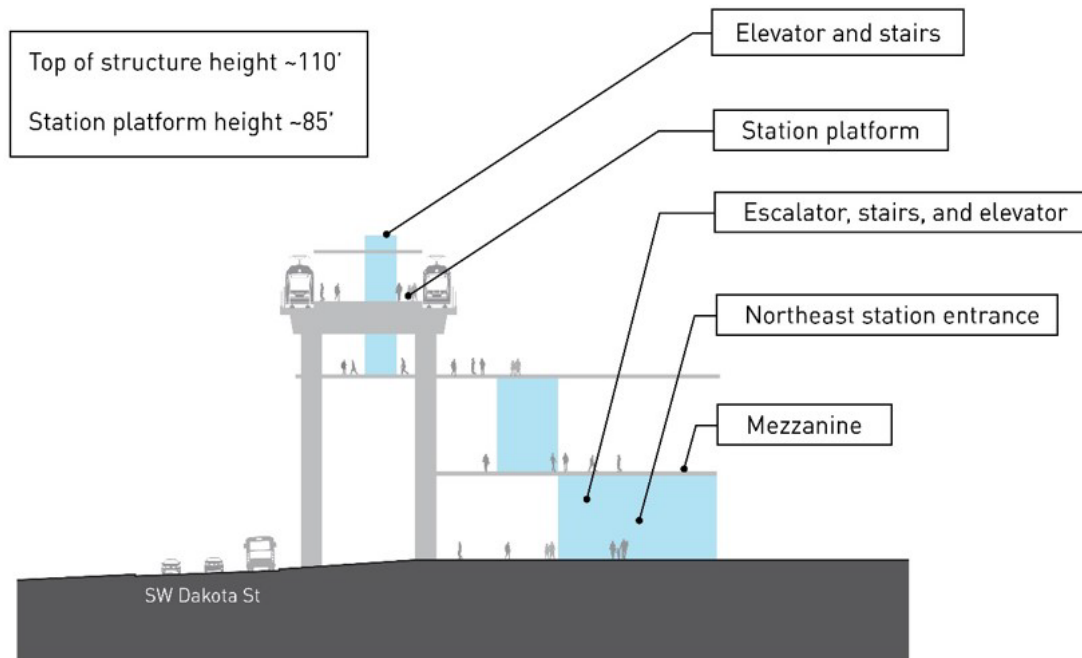




Figure 25. Cross section for Dakota Street Station Alternative (DEL-1a)



### Dakota Street Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-2a)

In the Dakota Street Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-2a), the station would be in the same location as the Dakota Street Station Alternative (DEL-1a), but the station would be at a lower elevation to connect to tunnel alternatives in the West Seattle

Junction Segment. The top of the station structure would be approximately 60 feet high.

To accommodate the station, 25th Avenue Southwest would be permanently closed between Southwest Dakota Street and Southwest Genesee Street. The plan and section for this alternative are shown in Figure 26 and Figure 27, respectively.

Figure 26. Station site plan for Dakota Street Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-2a)

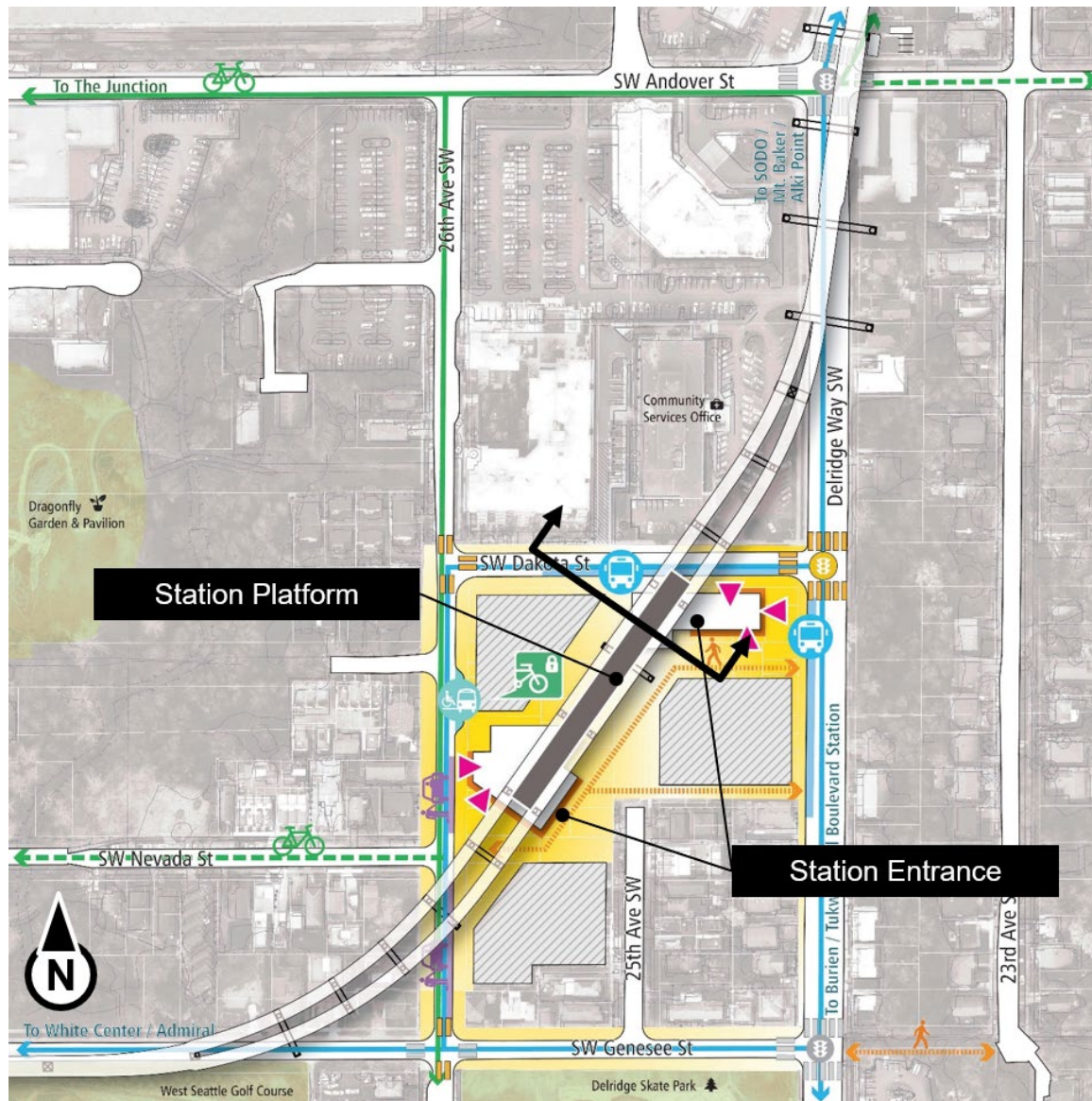
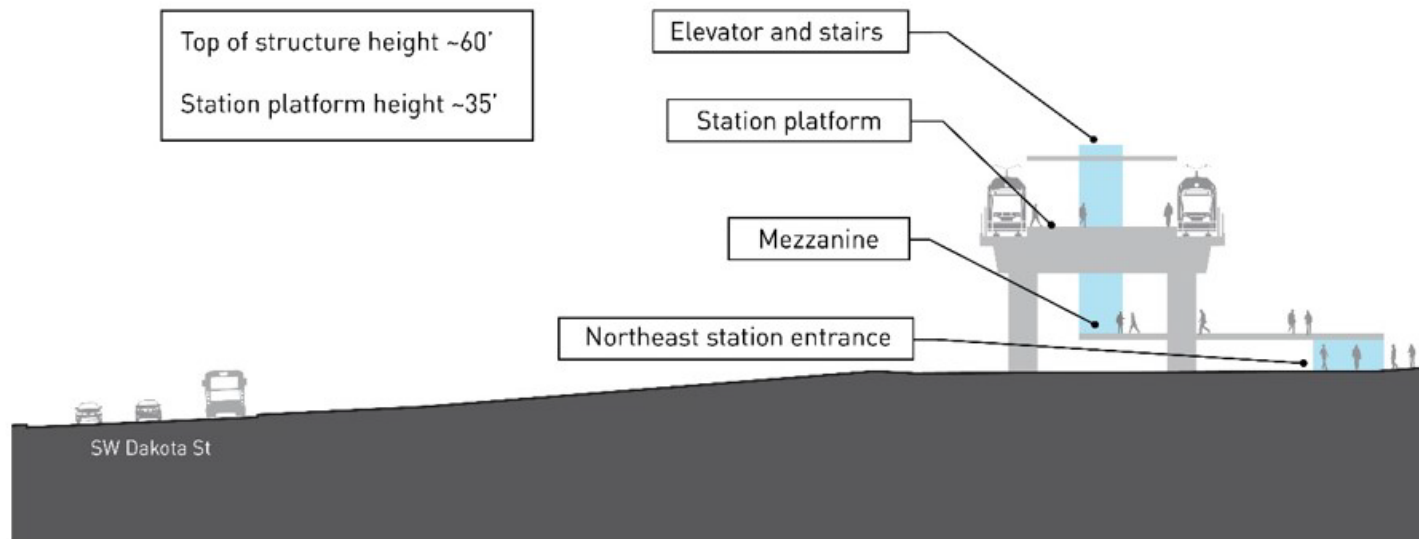


Figure 27. Cross section for Dakota Street Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-2a)



### Dakota Street Station North Alignment Option (DEL-1b)

In the Dakota Street Station North Alignment Option (DEL-1b), the station would be similar in height and location to the Dakota Street Station Alternative (DEL-1a) (Figure 24 and Figure 25).

### Dakota Street Station Lower Height North Alignment Option (DEL-2b)

In the Dakota Street Station Lower Height North Alignment Option (DEL-2b), the station location and height would be similar to the Dakota Street Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-2a) (Figure 26 and Figure 27).

To accommodate the station, 25th Avenue Southwest would be permanently closed between Southwest Dakota Street and Southwest Genesee Street. Access to Southwest Genesee Street from 30th Avenue Southwest would be permanently closed with a turnaround at the south end of the road.

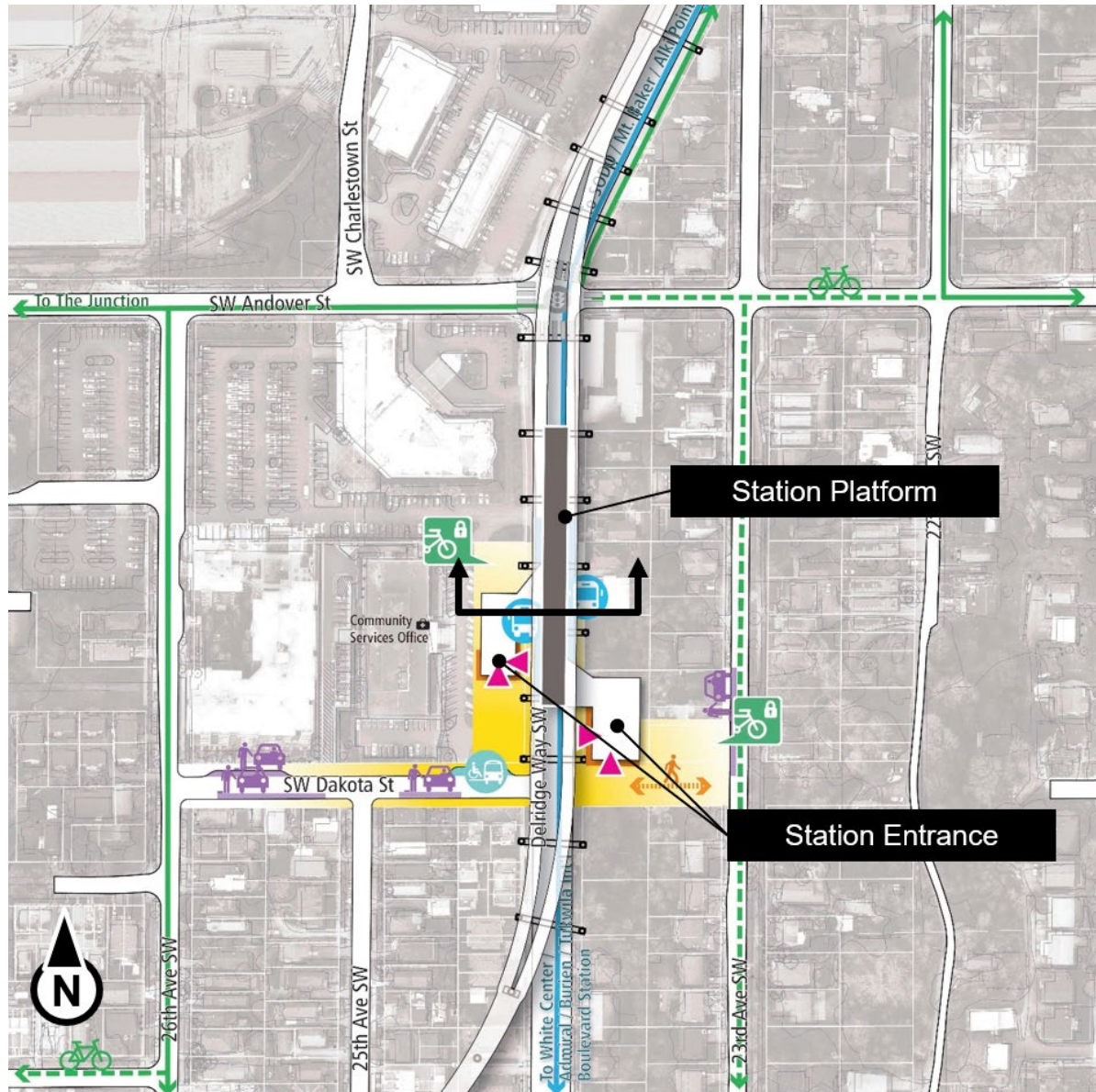
### Delridge Way Station Alternative (DEL-3)

In the Delridge Way Station Alternative (DEL-3), the station would be in the middle of Delridge Way Southwest, north of Southwest Dakota Street, and the top of the station structure would be approximately 90 feet high. Station access would be from adjacent streets, including both sides of Delridge Way Southwest.

The plan and section for this alternative are shown in Figure 28 and Figure 29, respectively.



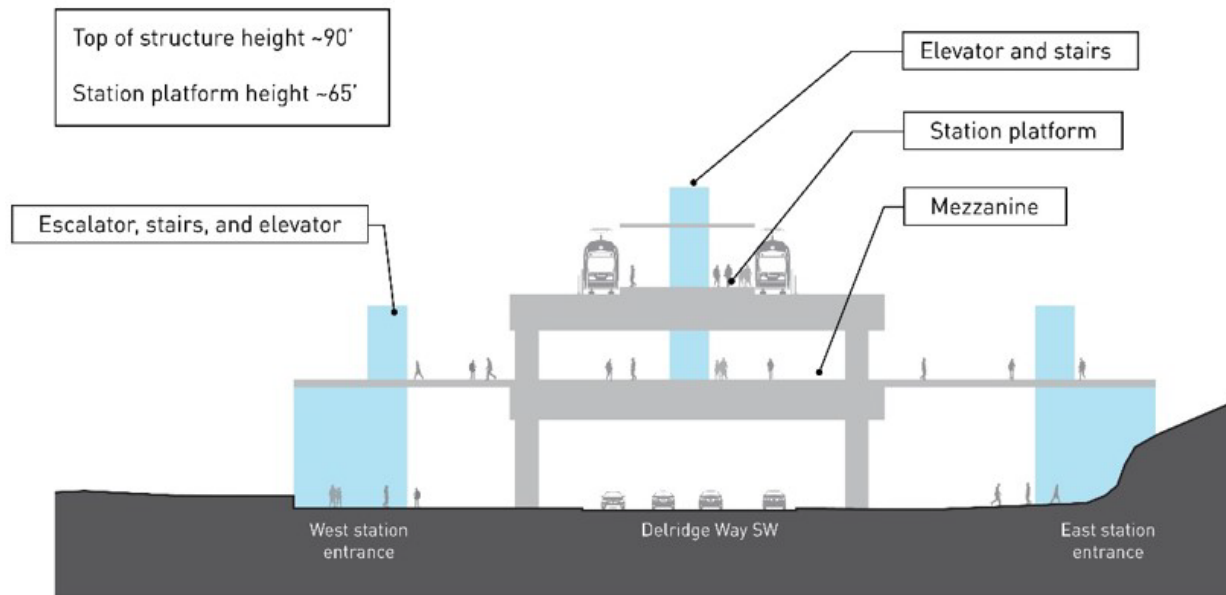
Figure 28. Station site plan for Delridge Way Station Alternative (DEL-3)



### Delridge Way Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-4)

In the Delridge Way Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-4), the station location, height, and access would be similar to Alternative DEL-3 (Figure 28 and Figure 29).

Figure 29. Cross section for Delridge Way Station Alternative (DEL-3)



### Andover Street Station Alternative (DEL-5)

In the Andover Street Station Alternative (DEL-5), the station would be elevated, north of Southwest Andover Street and west of Delridge Way Southwest, in a northeast-southwest orientation. The top of the station structure would be approximately 100 feet high. The plan for this alternative is shown in Figure 30. The cross section for the Andover Street Station Alternative (DEL-5) is similar to the Andover Street Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-6) (Figure 31) except for the top-of-station height.

### Andover Street Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-6)

In the Andover Street Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-6), the station location would be similar to the Andover Street Station Alternative (DEL-5) (Figure 30) but the top of the station structure would be slightly lower than the Andover Street Station Alternative (DEL-5), at approximately 90 feet high (Figure 31).



Figure 30. Station site plan for Andover Street Station Alternative (DEL-5)

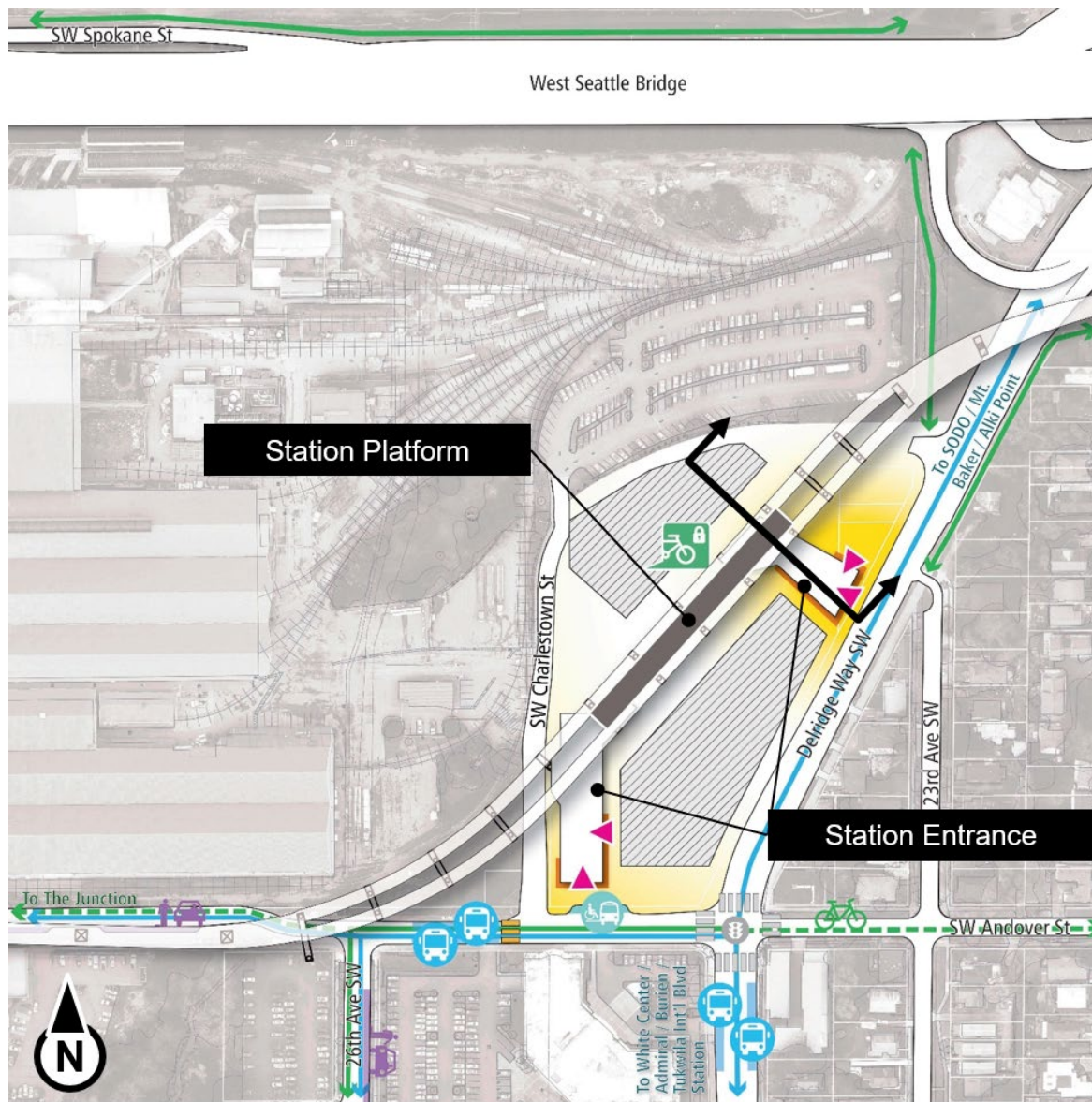
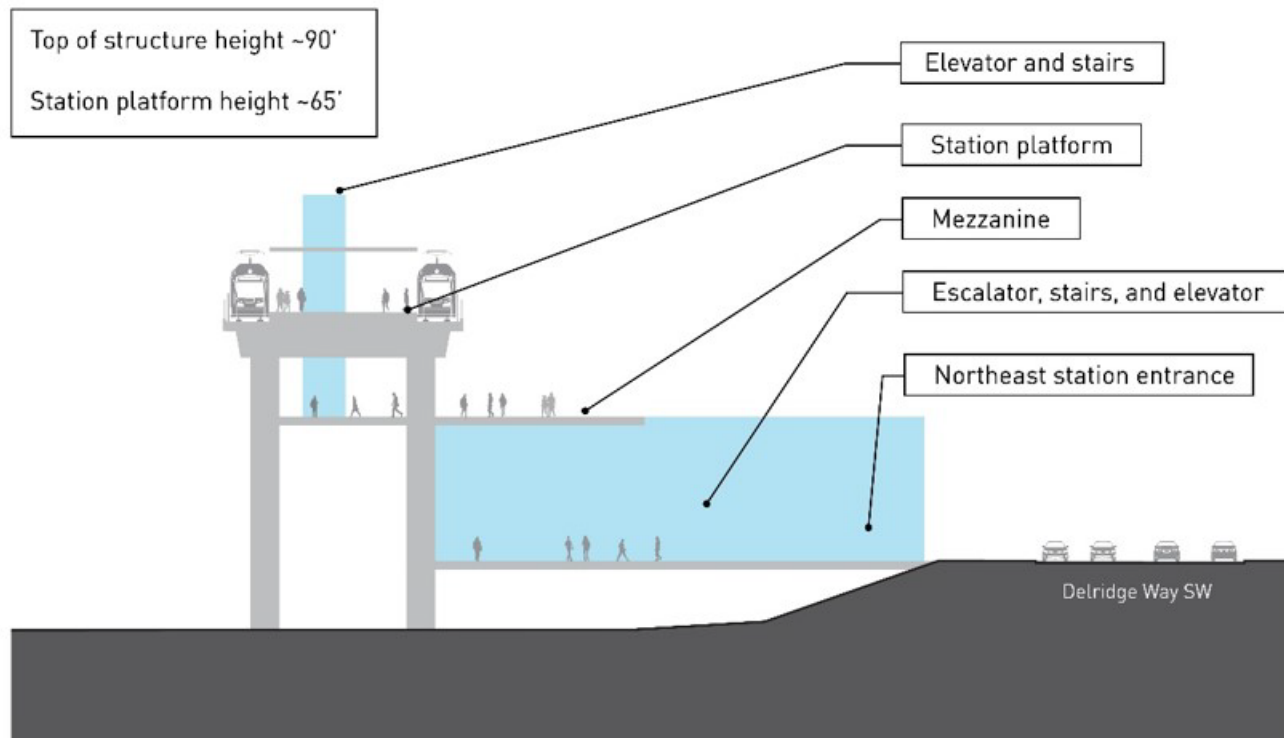


Figure 31. Cross section for Andover Street Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-6)



## 5.4 Evaluation Summary

Similar to the Chinatown-International District area, desired outcomes for the Delridge Station area were developed during the first step of the RET process and refined through ongoing community engagement. These outcomes are **an excellent transfer experience including bus and rail integration and options for RET community-desired amenities provided at the station and equitable transit-oriented development serving the community.**

This section summarizes the RET evaluation as it relates to these outcomes, focusing on two areas of impacts and benefits: bus-rail integration and potential for equitable transit-oriented development. The following text defines these focus areas, and summarizes high-level findings, with additional detailed provided in the following sections.

**Bus-rail integration:** Evaluates how connections between bus and light rail affect different users. This relates directly to the outcome of an excellent transfer experience including bus and rail

integration and options for RET community-desired amenities provided at the station.

- *Assuming the primary bus pathway to remain on Delridge Way SW, the Delridge Way Station Alternatives (DEL-3 and DEL-4) provide the most direct transfer environment between buses and light rail. The Dakota Street Station (DEL-1a, DEL-1b, DEL-2a and DEL-2b), and the Andover Station Alternatives (DEL-5 and DEL-6) would require buses to deviate off of Delridge Way SW, which could add time to trips. The Andover Street Station Alternatives are further north and would require a longer bus ride to access the station. Among the Dakota Street Station Alternatives, DEL-1a and DEL-1b, a trip from the station entrance to the platform could take approximately 1-1.5 minutes longer when compared to the lower height stations, DEL-2a and DEL-2b.*
- *In addition to route efficiency and travel time, urban design and station area land use shape passengers' experience of the transfer between bus and rail. The Delridge Way Station Alternatives would largely rely on streetscape enhancements along Delridge Way SW, along with small transit plazas adjacent to station entrances. The Dakota Street Station Alternatives offer the most potential for new services in adjacent transit-oriented development, as well as opportunity for well-designed plazas and street environments around the station. The Andover Street Station Alternatives would offer some potential for new public spaces as well as services in transit-oriented development, but these might not be as conveniently placed.*

**Potential for equitable transit-oriented development:** As discussed in the C-ID section, the construction of light rail stations and guideway in urban environments often involves the displacement of businesses and residents but also opens the potential for new

development that can become a community asset. This area of evaluation speaks to the outcome of equitable transit-oriented development serving the community.

- *The Dakota Street Station and Andover Station Alternatives provide the more predictable redevelopment scenarios given the potential property acquisition requirements for the project and therefore the most potential for equitable TOD when compared to the Delridge Way Station Alternatives.*

The sections below describe the evaluation and findings in greater detail.

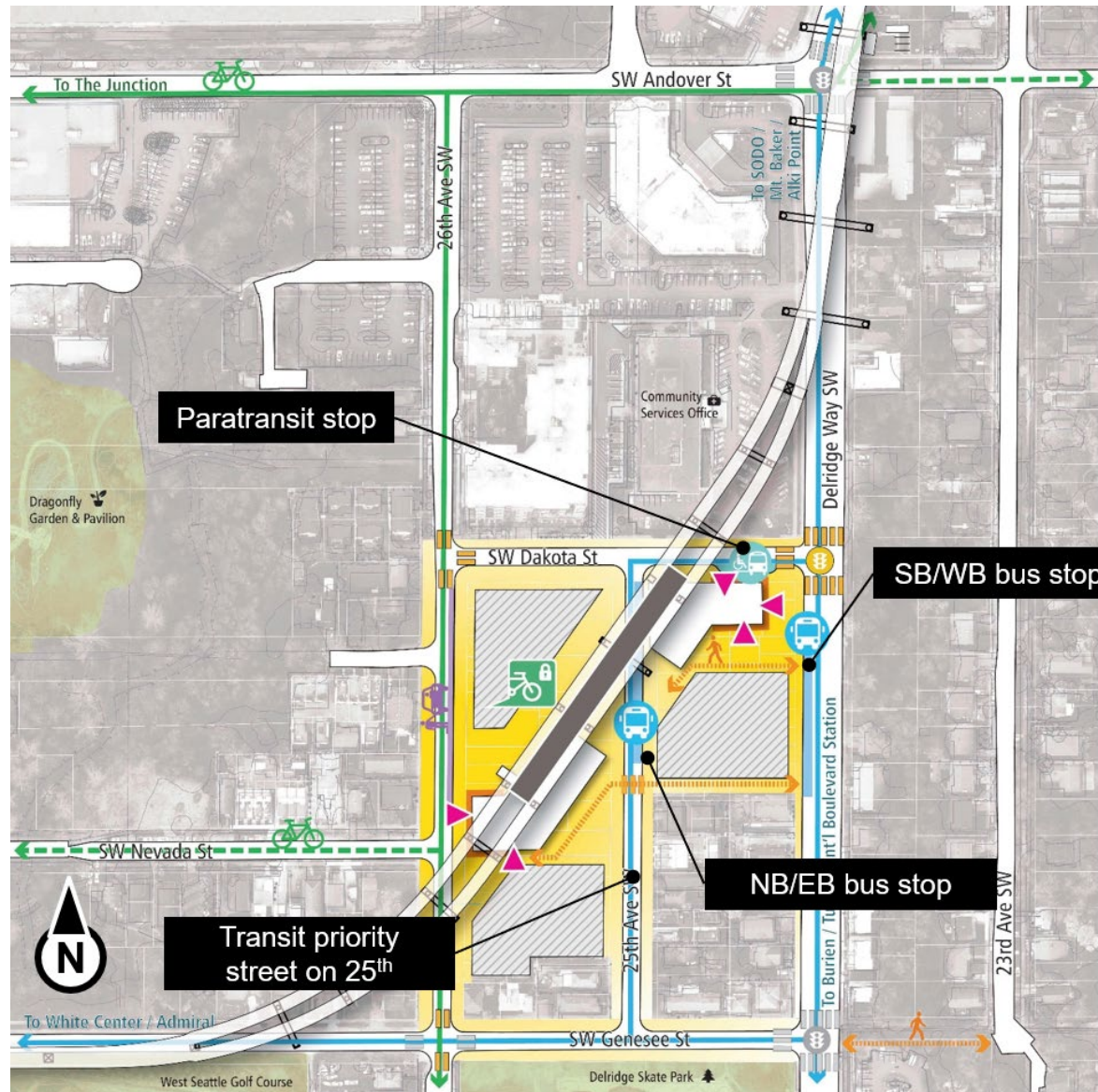
### Bus-Rail Integration

The Delridge station will be a key transfer point for current and future high-capacity bus routes serving South Seattle College and the Delridge Way SW corridor, including the future RapidRide H line. Siting and configuring the station for easy bus transfer zones and optimum circulation of buses will be important determinants of a high-quality transit integration experience at the station. Because this is already a busy transit corridor, disruptions to transit service during construction are also considered here.

With respect to transit integration, assuming the bus corridor to be on Delridge Way SW, the **Dakota Street Station Alternatives**, DEL-1a, DEL-1b, DEL-2a and DEL-2b, would require buses to deviate off of Delridge Way SW which could add time to trips, both for passengers transferring to light rail and those who would continue on the bus route. Figure 32 shows the transit integration concept for the Dakota Street Station Alternatives. While buses would have to detour off of Delridge Way SW, bus stops would be located near station entrances facilitating convenient access to the station entrances. Bus stops could be well-served by potential

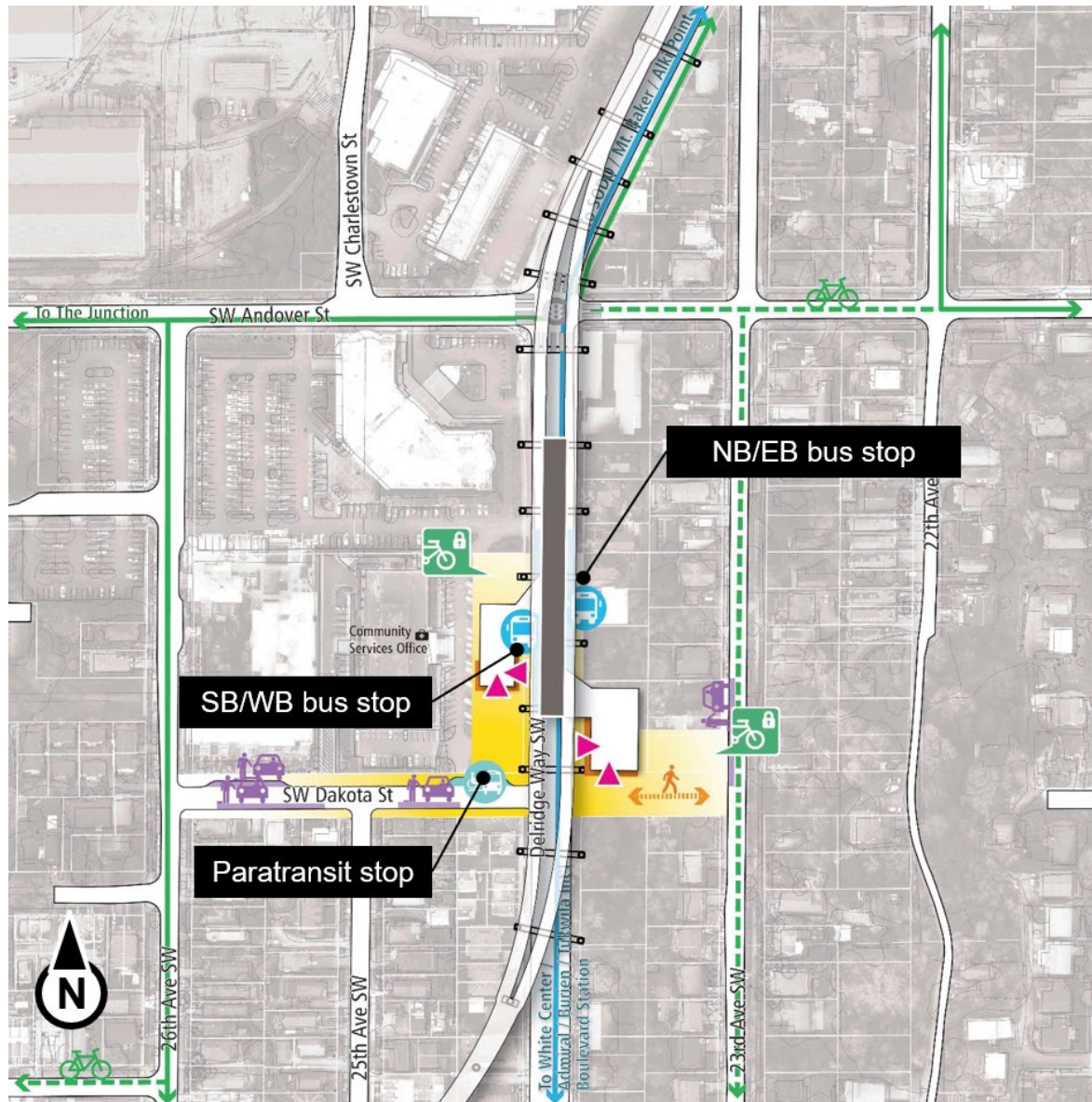


Figure 32. Transit integration diagram for Dakota Street Station alternatives



equitable transit-oriented development that could include ground-floor retail uses and services such as grocery, daycare, and social services, and could connect to a network of public spaces to enjoy on a nice day.

Figure 33. Transit integration diagram for Delridge Way Station Alternatives



The **Delridge Way Station Alternatives**, DEL-3 and DEL-4 with a station straddling Delridge Way SW would allow access from bus zones on both sides of Delridge Way SW, minimizing the walking distance between stops and station entrances. While there would be opportunity to improve streetscaping, unless the arterial designation of Delridge Way is rethought, the elevated guideway could result in a less hospitable street environment for all modes. Additionally, the property acquisition for this alternative would not yield development consistent with Sound Transit's eTOD policy, potentially resulting in fewer passenger-oriented services unless redevelopment by others occurs. Figure 33 shows the transit integration diagram for the Delridge Way Station alternatives.

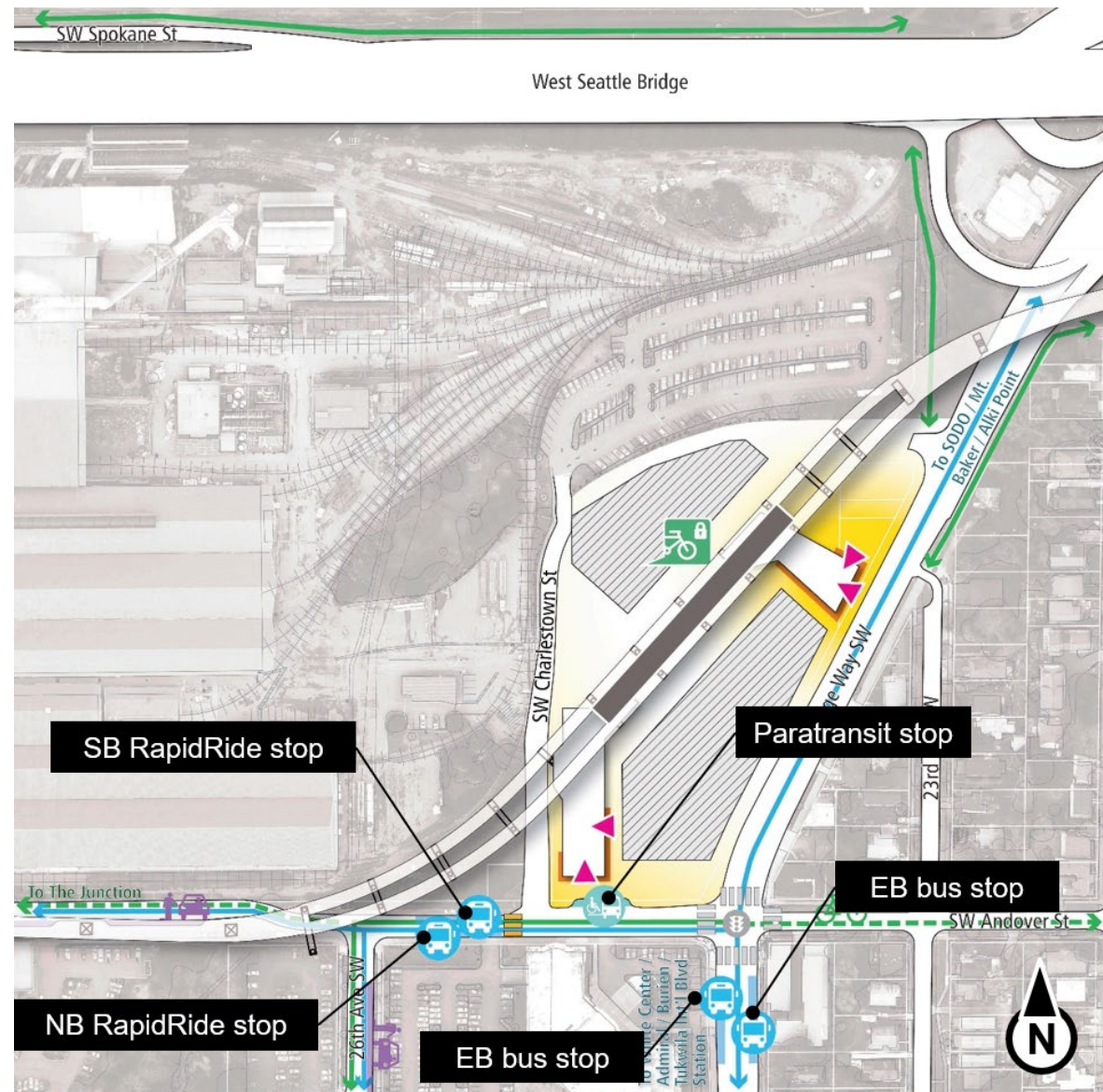


The **Andover Street Station Alternatives**, DEL-5 and DEL-6 would require buses to deviate off of Delridge Way SW which could add time to trips, both for passengers transferring to light rail and those who would continue on the bus route. Bus stops in the current design are proposed just west of the station entrance, necessitating a crossing of an existing access point to Nucor Steel, as well as busy Andover Street. Due the existing adjacent land uses and associated freight traffic, thoughtful coordination between Sound Transit, property owners, King County Metro and the City will be necessary to ensure convenient access for passengers. Thoughtful arrangement of vehicle access and circulation, along with streetscaping and direct connections to potential equitable transit-oriented development, could improve the passenger transfer experience at this station.

#### Travel time savings

In addition to discussing aspects of transit integration and disruption to transit passengers during construction, it is important to note the future time travel savings accrued to transit passengers traveling from areas south and southwest of the Delridge Station to downtown and beyond. With the addition of the West Seattle Link Extension, passengers traveling from Westwood Village to Westlake, for example, will save about 15 minutes one-

Figure 34. Transit integration diagram for Andover Street Alternatives



way by taking a bus from Westwood Village to Delridge Station and then transferring to Link to continue their trip. Though the future trip will involve a new transfer, there has and will continue to be efforts to optimize and streamline transfers, and the trip will be more reliable because light rail will not be subject to delays related to traffic congestion.

### Construction effects on transit

It is also important to note that the alternatives have different effects on transit passengers during construction.

- The Dakota Street Station alternatives would have the least effect on buses traveling between communities to the south and downtown Seattle.
- The Delridge Way Station alternatives would require long-term closures of multiple lanes on Delridge Way SW. This could delay current and future high-capacity bus routes serving South Seattle College and the Delridge Way SW corridor, including the future RapidRide H line. Without priority transit lanes during these lane closures, the Delridge Way Alternatives would have the greatest effect on routes traveling to downtown Seattle.
- The Andover Street Station alternative (DEL-5) would require a long-term closure of SW Avalon Way which would impact current high-capacity bus routes serving communities to the south, including RapidRide C line. The Andover Street Station Lower Height alternative (DEL-6) would reroute buses off of Avalon Way during nights and weekends.

### Potential for equitable Transit-Oriented Development

As previously discussed, displacement of residents and businesses is likely when light rail guideway and stations are being developed in already developed urban environments. When construction is complete, however, the land used for construction staging and other project needs may become available for equitable development opportunities.

While North Delridge was not identified as a low-income community with a higher percentage of communities of color based on census data, public feedback indicates that this area may include a larger percentage of communities of color and lower income individuals than the census block group and tracts, which cover a larger area, indicate. Displacements in this neighborhood may still affect these communities and are therefore discussed here. As the projects progress and community outreach continues, we will learn more about the people that might be affected, specifically in the North Delridge neighborhood.

Table 4 displays the number of residential and business displacements as well as equitable development potential for each alternative. Modified zoning was modeled to evaluate the development potential of sites at typical transit-oriented community densities. To provide a comparative analysis between development opportunity and displacements, the analysis was limited to an area in proximity to the station which does not include displacements associated with each alternative outside of the station area. Figure 35 shows the extents of the area used for the comparative analysis.

Table 4. Displacements and equitable transit-oriented development potential for each alternative in the Delridge station area

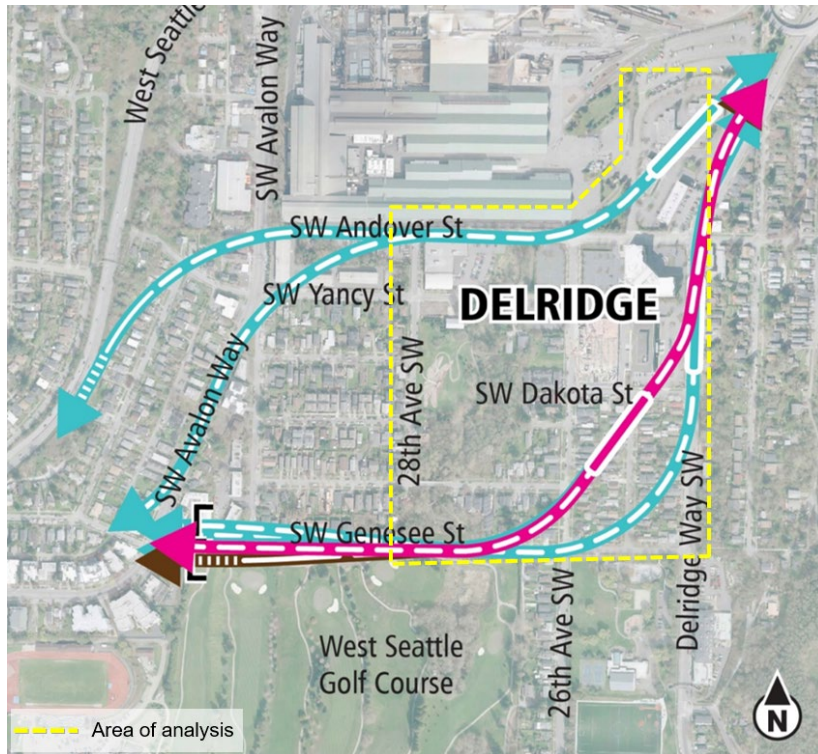
Alternative	Displacements		Equitable Development Potential	
	Residential displacements <sup>4</sup> (units)	Business displacements <sup>5</sup>	Potential new residential units	Potential new commercial space (gross square feet) <sup>6</sup>
Dakota Street Station Alternative (DEL-1a)	89	16	400	34,000
Dakota Street Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-2a)	90	16	400	34,000
Dakota Street Station North Alignment Option (DEL-1b)	87	16	400	34,000
Dakota Street Station Lower Height North Alignment Option (DEL-2b)	95	16	400	34,000
Delridge Way Station Alternative (DEL-3)	68	16	0	0
Delridge Way Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-4)	68	16	0	0
Andover Street Station Alternative (DEL-5)	0	19	160	260,000
Andover Street Station Lower Height Alternative (DEL-6)	0	20	160	260,000

<sup>4</sup> Figures reflect permanent residential displacements. There are no temporary residential displacements associated with any Delridge (DEL) alternatives.

<sup>5</sup> Figures reflect permanent business displacements. There are no temporary business displacements associated with any Delridge (DEL) alternatives.

<sup>6</sup> Commercial space could include retail, office, and other non-residential uses.

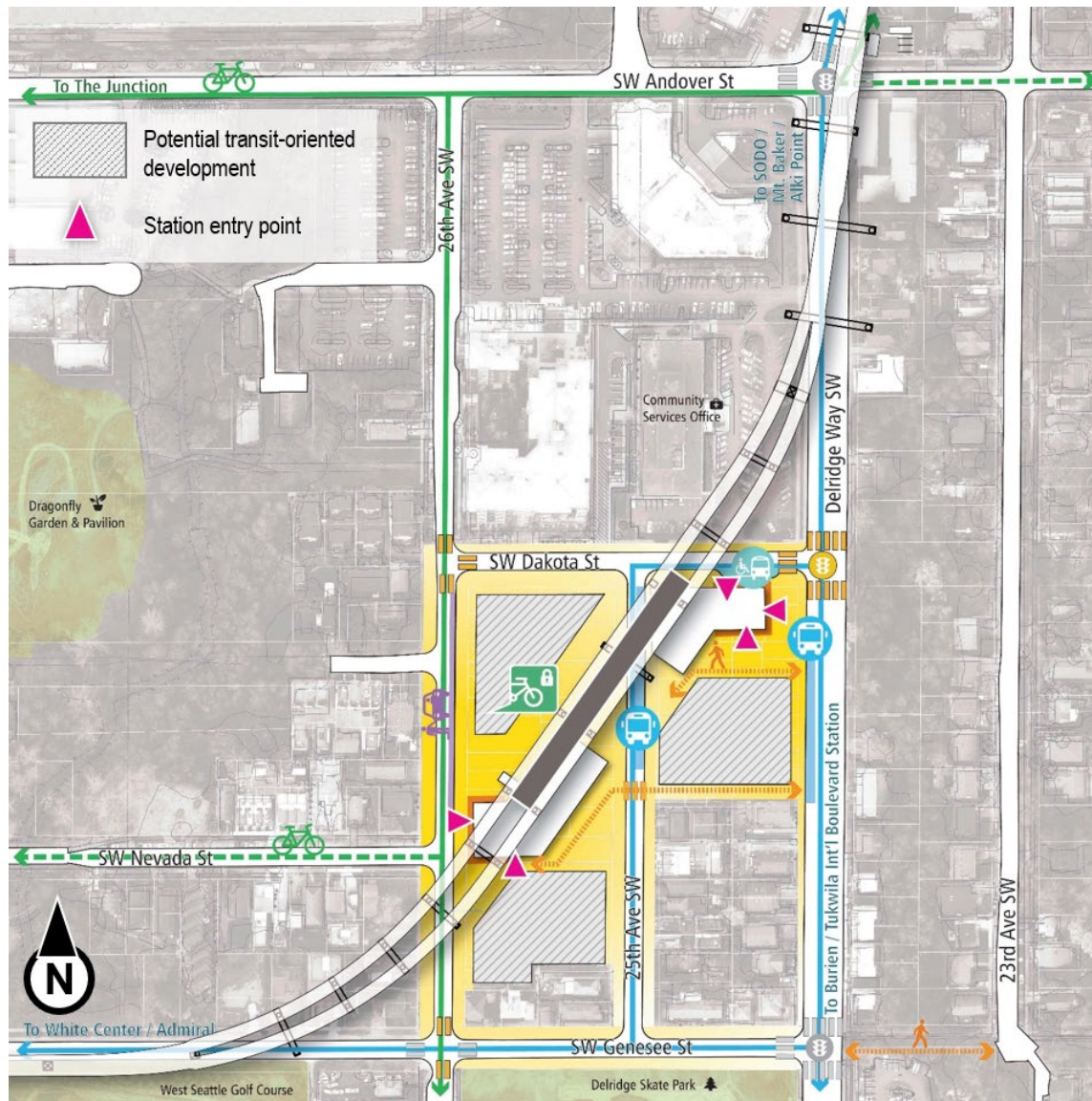
Figure 35. Area of analysis for displacements and equitable development potential in Delridge Station area



The **Dakota Street Station Alternatives** (DEL-1a, DEL-1b, DEL-2a and DEL-2b) have the most potential to catalyze equitable development in the station area. Given the configuration of this alternative, substantial property acquired for station construction and construction staging would remain after station construction that could be redeveloped at a higher intensity. Such redevelopment, assuming an adjustment to zoning and done in accordance with Sound Transit's equitable transit-oriented development (eTOD) policy, could result in the creation of approximately 400 affordable housing units near the station. In addition, the potential urban design of the station area could contribute to an integrated public realm that could encourage further development of neighborhood amenities (e.g., grocery store) and enhance access to opportunity. These alternatives would have between 87 and 95 residential displacements and 16 business displacements in the analysis area. Included in these displacements would be the Department of Youth and Family Services, Indian Child Welfare Office and Department of Social & Health Services. Figure 35 displays the approximate location and configuration of the station and associated potential equitable development opportunities for the Dakota Street Station alternatives.



Figure 36. Potential equitable transit-oriented development areas for Dakota Street Station alternatives (DEL-1a, DEL-1b, DEL-2a, DEL-2b)

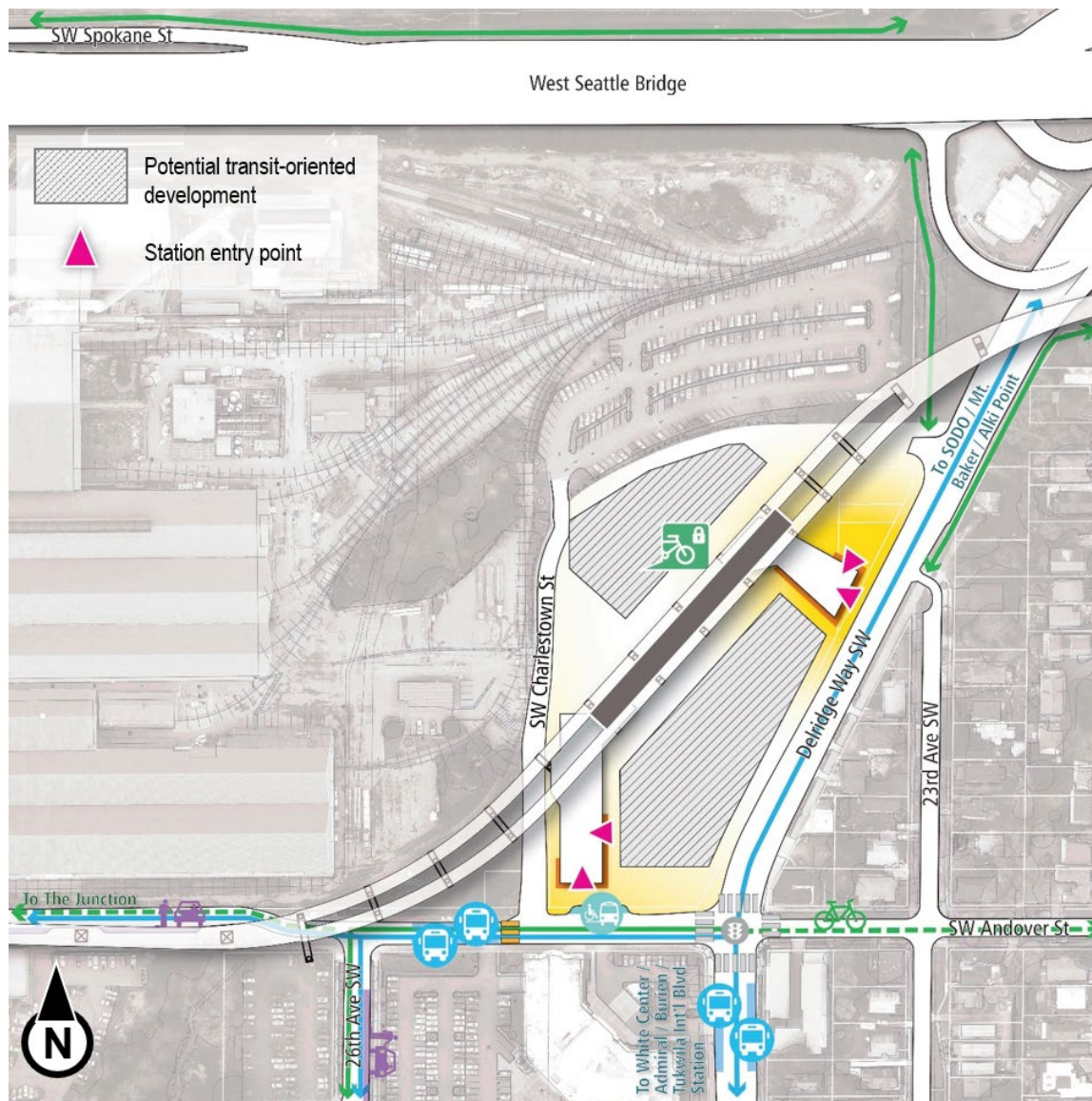


The **Delridge Way Station Alternatives**, DEL-3 and DEL-4 have potential property effects from the guideway geometry that reduce development capacity and opportunities for future affordable housing associated with potential property acquisition for constructing the project. These options would likely result in more piecemeal redevelopment scenarios undertaken by the private market, and occur over a longer timeline. As a result, there would potentially be less likelihood of a robust public benefit outcome that includes affordable housing and community-identified amenities. These alternatives would have 68 residential displacements and 16 business displacements in the analysis area. Included in these displacements would be the Department of Youth and Family Services, Indian Child Welfare Office and Department of Social & Health Services. The Delridge Way Station alternatives do not have any associated areas of potential equitable transit-oriented development.

The **Andover Station Alternatives**, DEL-5 and DEL-6, have potential to catalyze considerable equitable development, if you could overcome site complexities and other challenges. Given the

configuration of the alternative, substantial property acquired for station construction could be redeveloped, though this is offset by several factors. Current zoning would limit uses on the site to commercial and industrial, and the industrial Nucor Steel property to the west and West Seattle Bridge on-ramps to the north limit the development potential of adjacent properties. The configuration of the site, including grades, would likely also require a shared structure between the station and new development, which could increase development complexity and costs. If these challenges could be overcome, nearly 800,000 gross square feet of development could be realized on the site, including potential housing east of the station if sites were deemed suitable. These alternatives would have no residential displacements and between 19 and 20 business displacements in the analysis area. Alternative DEL-6 would displace a social service provider that serves people experiencing mental illness and homelessness located outside the area of analysis. Figure 37 displays the approximate location and configuration of the station and associated potential equitable development opportunities for the Andover Station alternatives.

Figure 37. Potential equitable transit-oriented development areas for Andover Street Station alternatives (DEL-5, DEL-6)



## 5.5 Delridge Community Engagement and Input

### Community Engagement Approach

Sound Transit's community engagement approach for the Delridge Station has sought to both engage those in proximity to the station that may be affected during construction as well as the communities of color and low-income communities that may access the light rail system at the Delridge Station by bike or bus. Project materials for outreach efforts were translated into Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), as well as Vietnamese and Spanish. In some cases, materials were also translated into Somali, Korean and Khmer. Sound Transit's community engagement approach around the Delridge Station has included:

- Conducting interviews with social service providers and community organizations to better understand populations in the study area, including how communities of color and low-income populations might relate to the project.
- Holding smaller meetings focused on individual communities or organizations.
- Attending community and neighborhood meetings.
- Rotating a project kiosk around public gathering spaces in the neighborhood.
- Meeting communities where they gather, like fairs and festivals, community centers, and community events or meetings.
- Holding a community workshop focused on the new Delridge Station, including presentation and facilitated table discussions.

- Conducting door-to-door business outreach and providing notifications to increase project and process awareness, build relationships, gather feedback, and answer questions.
- Partnering with the City of Seattle's DON Community liaisons to build capacity and awareness in communities about the project and engage communities in the Draft EIS comment period.

### Community Input

Community perspectives and feedback are critical in understanding how the proposed alternatives would benefit and/or burden communities around the Delridge Station. The following include key themes from conversations with the community during outreach and community engagement activities, particularly engagement with social service providers and community-based organizations in the area. This section will be updated in the final report after we receive additional feedback from the community during the draft EIS comment period.

- Low-income families from neighborhoods south of Delridge, many of whom are immigrants, refugees and people of color, rely heavily on public transportation to access services, jobs and schools. More frequent and improved bus service to a Delridge light rail station could benefit low-income populations and communities of color who live further south.
- When the West Seattle extension comes online, many shared advice for how to better serve communities of color and low-income communities, noting that factors such as cost, payment method and presence of security and fare enforcement could be barriers. Additionally, community members shared that education will be essential for many immigrant and refugee families that are new to the area and do not understand how local public transportation operates. Providing language-neutral wayfinding and signage, and



announcements in languages other than English would improve accessibility for people who speak limited or no English.

- Community members shared concerns about residential and business displacement and that increasingly residential development in the area is not affordable. Some expressed concerns that this may only continue to increase with light rail coming to the neighborhood.
- Many shared interest in redevelopment occurring in the station area that includes affordable housing and neighborhood amenities, such as a grocery store.
- In light of recent experiences related the West Seattle High Bridge closure and construction for the RapidRide H line, community members have shared feedback about the importance of reliable, regional transportation connections and interest in minimizing disruptions to local businesses, especially maintaining business operations during construction.

## 5.6 Delridge Summary

Based on the Draft EIS results and available data and community feedback, questions that were posed during alternatives development remain key questions that will inform how each of these alternatives perform with respect to racial equity.

- What role could the light rail investment and new station play in supporting the future vision for the community and providing lasting benefit, particularly for communities of color and low income communities?
- How do communities of color and low-income communities currently interact with the nearby amenities and what are the barriers they face in accessing services?

- Are there disproportionate impacts to communities of color and low income communities associated with potential property acquisitions for the station and alignment options?
- What does an excellent transfer experience feel like? Is it the transfer that takes the least time or fewest barriers? Does it offer convenient amenities or other services that make it a welcoming or more inviting transfer experience?

As the project progresses, further engaging communities of color and low-income communities, building on the foundation developed so far, will be important to understand the potential benefit and burden of the future station and alignment option(s) that will be studied during the next phase.

## 6 CORRIDOR WIDE EVALUATION

### 6.1 Evaluation Summary

- *The key drivers of differentiation between the Draft EIS alternatives with respect to racial and social equity include access, opportunities for equitable development, residential unit displacements and business and commerce effects.*

#### Transit integration and access

Achieving efficient and direct transfers between modes of transit is a critical dimension of creating equitable access to the regional transit system throughout the corridor. The transit integration experience is especially important at the terminus stations in West Seattle and Ballard, which will have larger travel sheds with multiple long-haul bus routes intercepting light rail service. Transit integration will also be important at the Delridge Station, where many people traveling from further south will access Link via bus transfers (discussed in Section 5.4); and potentially at the Smith Cove Station, which may be an interim terminus for a period, depending on project costs and funding. Siting and configuring these stations to minimize the need to cross busy streets and maximize the intuitiveness of access through visual cues will enhance the rider experience, particularly for riders with limited English proficiency. Similarly, designing streets and allocating the right-of-way to support great walking and biking environments, combined with connections to investments in the broader non-motorized network, will enable more choices of access to the station, particularly for youth.

#### Opportunities for Equitable Development

Realizing equitable transit-oriented development on surplus property acquired by Sound Transit (or through joint development of transit facilities) in station areas is one strategy for enhancing racial equity corridor-wide. Most stations are located in areas with high access to opportunity, but with low percentages of residents of color. Developing affordable housing along with supportive services such as daycare, education, training, and public services could provide opportunities for lower-income people, including people of color, to live in some of the region's highest opportunity neighborhoods.

#### Access to Opportunity

While available demographic data indicates that the C-ID Station area is the only WSBLE station area with communities of color and low income populations notably higher than the City average, there are people of color and low-income individuals throughout the corridor. These individuals, as well as those identified in the C-ID and to the south accessing the system through the Delridge Station, would benefit from increased access to opportunity to points along the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extension as well as other locations along the entire system. Opportunities for improved access include connections to University of Washington and UW Medical Center; Capitol Hill urban center and Seattle Central College and Seattle University; Northgate urban center and North Seattle College; and community facilities, jobs, and institutions in Bellevue, Redmond, Lynnwood, Everett, and Tacoma. In addition to these major institutions and destinations, many station areas along the WSBLE contain an array of assets including cultural/community centers, schools and businesses that provide service sector jobs. In addition to communities served by the project corridor, people of color and low-income

individuals in other areas of the region currently served by Link light rail (e.g., Rainier Valley, Tukwila, the University District, and Northgate) and areas to be served by light rail extensions under construction (Lynnwood, Federal Way) would benefit from increased access to points along the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions.

### **Residential unit and business displacements and construction impacts**

In the Downtown segment, the 5th Avenue/Harrison Street alternative would result in a higher number of residential displacements. Construction of the 6th Avenue/Mercer Street alternative at Midtown Station would result in temporary displacement of tenants (126 units) and shelter functions at the at the Y.W.C.A. (1118 5th Avenue).

In the South Interbay segment, the Elevated Galer Street Station/Central Interbay and Prospect Street Station/15th Avenue alternatives would result in a higher number of residential and business displacements than the Prospect Street Station/Central Interbay alternative.

In the Interbay/Ballard segment, the Elevated 14th Avenue alternative would result in a higher number of residential displacements than the Tunnel 14th Avenue alternative, the Tunnel 15th Avenue option, and the Elevated 15th Avenue alternative. The Tunnel 14th Avenue alternative would result in the lowest number of business displacements.

## **6.2 Corridor Wide Engagement and Input**

### **Community Engagement Approach**

As part of community engagement across the project corridor during the alternatives development phase, Sound Transit conducted 27 interviews with community organizations and social service providers in 2018 and early 2019. These interviews were one of many tactics used to better understand community needs and preferred methods of engagement and communication. Other goals of the interviews included:

- Sharing early information about the project and planning process
- Building awareness and understanding of community concerns, interests and ideas
- Establishing relationships and fostering trust between the project team and community stakeholders
- Supporting development of project outcomes that are racially and socially equitable

At each interview, Sound Transit asked a series of questions that focused on transit usage, particularly the benefits and barriers of using the existing (and future) light rail system and whether that varied based on race, income or some other factor. This feedback has informed community engagement strategies and approaches during the Draft EIS process and will continue to be important as planning continues.

### **Community Input**

The following summarizes the comments and themes Sound Transit heard from social service providers and other

organizations during the interviews, along with some additions in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **Access to opportunity / using light rail and transit**

Comments on how communities access the current system and how they might use the new extensions included:

- Many homeless and low-income populations depend on transit and more public transportation is always a good thing, with additional light rail allowing for people to access different parts of the city and the services they need.
- People receiving social services have a range of abilities. Locating light rail stations close to social service providers and housing is critical, and ADA access should be maintained or enhanced.
- Many shared that there are challenges for communities of color, low income communities and particularly those that experience homelessness to using the system, including discomfort with fare enforcement, language barriers and cost. One service provider shared that many must choose between buying a meal or paying for transit.
- Many shared the importance of making sure stations feel safe for all users, with ideas about activating stations and keeping pedestrian routes and stations well-lit. The emphasis on a feeling of safety for all users has amplified.

#### **Affordability and community cohesion**

- There is concern that new light rail extensions in neighborhoods will spur development and push low-income families out of their homes as well as farther away from transit. As such, we heard about the importance of incorporating affordable housing into the project, so low-

income populations and communities of color don't get left out.

- We also heard about concerns related to small business displacement and potential gentrification. This concern has only been building in light of challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery.
- Some expressed concerns about elevated alignments and impacts including residential and business displacement, noise and traffic impacts.
- Some feedback noted that elevated alignments are built in lower-income and diverse neighborhoods while tunnels are built in more affluent neighborhoods.

#### **Ensure meaningful, timely and effective engagement**

- Many expressed an interest in how project decisions are made and how to ensure all voices are heard, particularly those from traditionally under-represented communities.
- Some expressed concerns that project decisions around the city are not equitable and agencies need to better consider how to incorporate voices from people with low incomes, people of color and non-English speakers.
- As community engagement methods adapt in response to COVID-19 health and safety guidelines, some have shared concern over how to meaningfully engage communities of color and how much capacity these communities have to engage given all the other challenges they are now facing.



## 7 WHAT'S NEXT: FUTURE PHASES OF THE PROJECT

Sound Transit is committed to inclusively and meaningfully engaging communities along the project corridors in the planning process. We recognize this project would bring both benefits and impacts to many who live and work in the area. In future project phases, Sound Transit will expand upon the engagement and lessons learned through the alternatives development and Draft EIS phase and look for opportunities to answer questions or address issues that were posed by the community during these initial phases.

### 7.1 Final Environmental Review Phase

With the publication of the Draft EIS now complete, the next step in the environmental review process is the development of the Final EIS, which will extend through 2023. In the Final EIS, Sound Transit will respond to comments received on the Draft EIS. After the Final EIS is published, the Sound Transit Board will select the project to be built, including route and station locations. The project will then move into final design, followed by construction, testing and pre-operations.

### 7.2 Opportunities for Future Engagement

The comment period for the WSBLE Draft EIS extends from January 28 to April 28, 2022. There are multiple opportunities to engage with the project during this comment period and beyond.

There are four online events and one in-person event in March 2022 where you can learn about the project, get questions answered, and provide a verbal comment on the Draft EIS. Each

meeting will include a brief presentation, question and answer session, and oral testimony captured by a court reporter.

Project staff are also offering virtual office hours, where you can chat one-on-one with a project team member and ask questions about the project. You can also comment on the Draft EIS by email, phone, or mail. More information on all these ways to connect is available at the WSBLE online open house at [wsblink.participate.online](https://wsblink.participate.online).

At the conclusion of the Draft EIS comment period, the Sound Transit Board will consider information in the Draft EIS, the RET Report, and comments received on the Draft EIS as they confirm or modify the preferred alternatives in Interbay/Ballard, South Interbay, Downtown, SODO, Duwamish, Delridge, and West Seattle Junction segments, and as they consider a preferred alternative in the C-ID segment.