



West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions

Expanding light rail in Seattle

Current projects status: Environmental review

The Sound Transit Board identified the preferred alternative for the West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) in July 2022 and the Ballard Link Extension (BLE) in March 2023.

The extensions were initially on the same environmental review timeline. However, given additional environmental review needed for BLE, environmental review for the two extensions will now proceed on different timelines.

Maps and timelines inside →



About the projects


The West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions 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 regional transit system expansion approved by voters in November 2016.



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West Seattle Link Extension

 **Link light rail**

West Seattle Link Extension

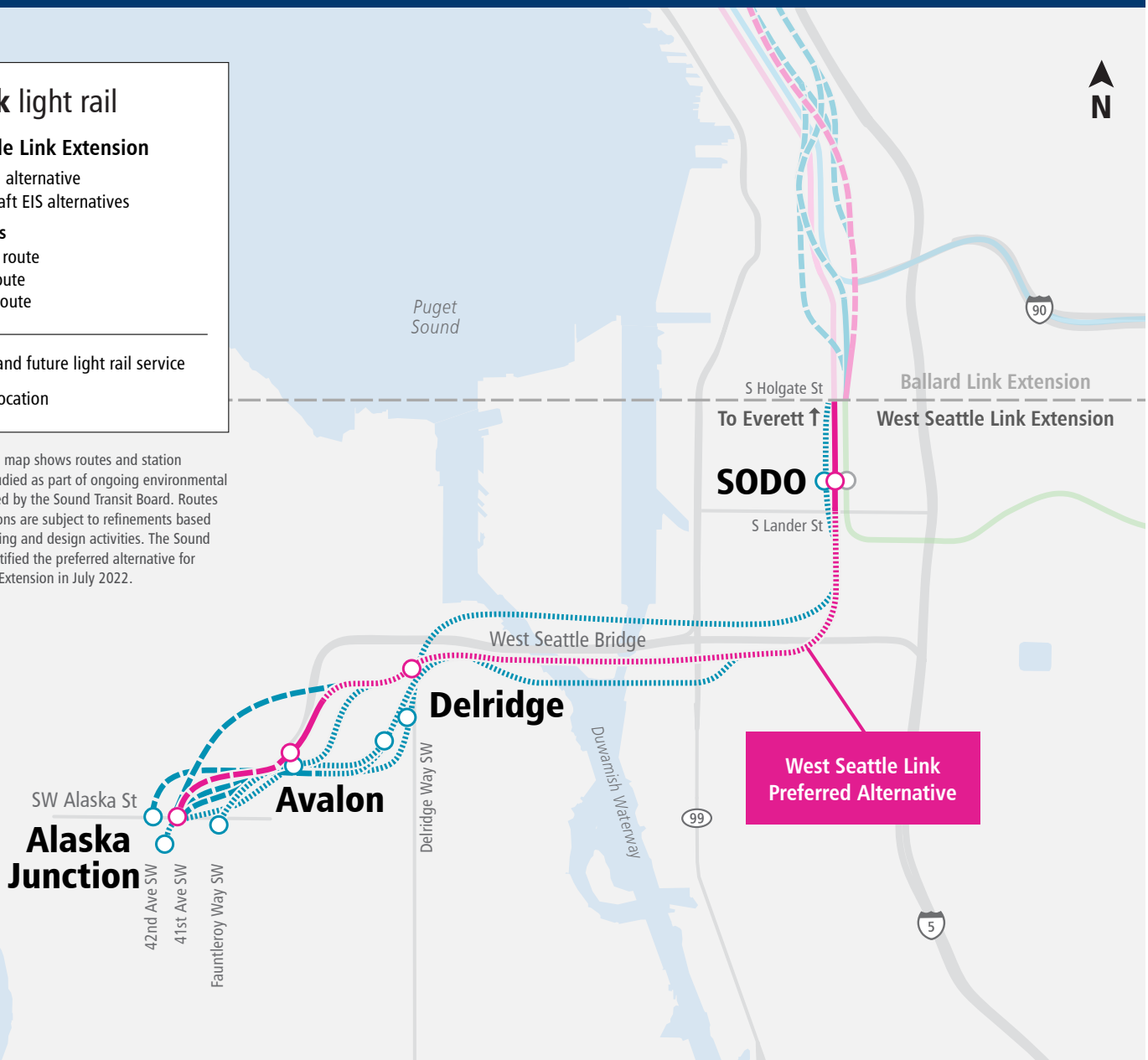
- Preferred alternative
- Other Draft EIS alternatives

Route profiles

- Elevated route
- Tunnel route
- Surface route

- Current and future light rail service
- Station location

March 2023: This map shows routes and station locations to be studied as part of ongoing environmental review as identified by the Sound Transit Board. Routes and station locations are subject to refinements based on ongoing planning and design activities. The Sound Transit Board identified the preferred alternative for West Seattle Link Extension in July 2022.



West Seattle Link project benefits

- Adds 4.7 miles of light rail service from downtown Seattle to West Seattle's Alaska Junction neighborhood.
- Includes 4 new stations between SODO and Alaska Junction.

Learn more about both projects, subscribe email updates and find out how to get involved:

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Project timeline



Ballard Link Extension

Link light rail

Ballard Link Extension

- Preferred alternative
- Other Draft EIS alternatives

Route profiles

- Elevated route
- Tunnel route
- Surface route

- Current and future light rail service
- Station location

March 2023: This map shows routes and station locations to be studied as part of ongoing environmental review as identified by the Sound Transit Board. Routes and station locations are subject to refinements based on ongoing planning and design activities. The Sound Transit Board identified the preferred alternative for Ballard Link Extension in March 2023.



Ballard Link project benefits

- Adds 7.1 miles of light rail service from downtown Seattle to Ballard's Market Street area, including a new downtown Seattle rail-only tunnel.
- Includes 9 new stations between Chinatown-International District and Market Street.

Project timeline



*We are currently working with federal partners to understand the timeline of our ongoing environmental review phase. The BLE project timeline will be updated when additional information is available.

How did we get here?

From 2017-2019, project staff conducted an extensive alternatives development process that resulted in the Sound Transit Board identifying preferred alternatives and other alternatives to study in a Draft EIS.

The West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions (WSBLE) were evaluated together in a Draft EIS published in January 2022. The public comment period lasted for 90 days between January and April, 2022. As described in the Draft EIS, the two extensions will function as two separate lines, with the West Seattle Link Extension connecting to Everett and the Ballard Link Extension connecting to Tacoma.

The Sound Transit Board identified the preferred alternative for the West Seattle Link Extension in July 2022 and requested further studies for the Ballard Link Extension. Sound Transit staff held community workshops, open houses, stakeholder meetings and surveys between September 2022 and January 2023. The Sound Transit Board identified a preferred alternative for the Ballard Link Extension in March 2023.

What's next for West Seattle Link?

WSLE will proceed to a Final EIS, which is anticipated to be published in 2024. Start of service is scheduled for 2032.

What's next for Ballard Link?

A new Draft EIS will be completed for BLE to reflect action by the Sound Transit Board in March 2023. The new BLE Draft EIS will build upon and incorporate the existing work to date on the WSBLE Draft EIS. This includes all previous scoping comments, public outreach and feedback and environmental analysis. Alternatives will be updated, including analysis of the preferred alternative, as well as other refinements and alternatives identified by the Board. The environmental timeline will be updated when it is available. Start of service is scheduled for 2039.

Station planning

Building light rail isn't just about moving people from place to place, it's also about building community. Over the next couple of years, we will work with communities along the project corridor to help inform early station design. It's our goal to identify solutions that best fit the vision for your neighborhood and connect more people to mass transit.



Stay involved

Sound Transit is committed to meaningful public participation. We offer both in-person and virtual engagement opportunities to accommodate the community's needs. Reach out with questions, thoughts or to request a briefing for your community group.

Equity and inclusion

We are also committed to inclusively engaging historically-underrepresented communities. If you are interested in learning more about this project and how it may affect your community, please contact us and we will work with you to find an appropriate medium for providing project information.

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Questions?

Contact the Community Engagement team:
wsblink@soundtransit.org or 206-903-7229



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