



West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions

**FEB. MONTHLY
REPORT: EXTERNAL
ENGAGEMENT**

February 2020



West Seattle and Ballard

Link Extensions

Activities snapshot



13 comments and questions



18 community briefings



2 fairs and festivals *engaging 279 community members*



23 fieldwork activities and 3 property owner meetings



1 email update *engaging 10,359 subscribers*



Light rail service will extend to West Seattle in 2030 and Ballard in 2035.



Emails and phone calls

During the reporting period, the project team received 13 comments and questions from emails and phone calls.

A few questions and comments

- Support for light rail expansion and Sound Transit's efforts.
- Support for light rail service to extend from West Seattle to communities further south and connect to the Fauntleroy ferry terminal.
- Concerns about the property acquisition assessment and process.
- Concerns about waterway user survey data collection methodology.
- Questions about when the final route will be decided.
- Questions about the location of the north portal.
- Questions about how many West Seattle alternatives are being studied in the Draft EIS.
- Requests from community organizations for a project briefing.



Community briefings

During the reporting period, the project team participated in 18 briefings, engaging the following groups or individuals:

- Ballard-Interbay Regional Transportation Study Public Meeting (2/3)
- Seniors in Action Foundation (2/3)
- East Alaska Junction Neighborhood (2/4)
- First Hill Improvement Association, Urban Design and Public Space Committee (2/5)
- District 1 Community Network (2/5)
- West Edge Neighborhood Association (2/5)
- Ballard Avenue Landmark District Board (2/6)
- Pigeon Point Neighborhood Council (2/10)
- Amazon (2/10)
- Downtown Seattle Association (2/11)
- Seattle Center Resident Directors (2/12)
- 5 City Commissions (2/12)
- KEXP (2/14)
- Seattle Freight Advisory Board (2/18)
- Delridge Neighborhood Development Association (2/21)
- Harbor Island Stakeholders (2/21)
- CID Forum (2/24)
- Junction Neighborhood Organization (JuNO) (2/26)

Common questions and comments

Corridor wide

- Support for affordable housing and transit-oriented development near stations.
- Support for providing bike parking and charging stations for electric bikes at stations.
- Support for partnering closely with community groups to host future workshops and neighborhood forums.
- Support for youth engagement on the project to include their perspective as future riders.
- Support for bus service connections that take passengers directly to the station.



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- Support for bridging the first and last mile gap to stations.
- Support for new stations to have ample lighting, consistently operable escalators and elevators and to include public restrooms.
- Concerns about temporary construction effects disrupting nearby businesses.
- Concerns about transit-oriented development and what it will look like in industrial areas along the project corridor.
- Questions about how underserved communities who currently lack transit options will benefit from this project.
- Questions about how stations serve people with limited mobility if there is no parking at stations.
- Questions about third-party funding sources and potential impacts of Initiative-976.
- Questions about the property acquisition timeline and process.

Interbay/Ballard

Stations: Ballard, Interbay and Smith Cove

- Support for a Ballard station that will serve commuters and increase patronage at local businesses.
- Questions about whether a Sounder station can be built in Magnolia so riders can transfer to light rail at Smith Cove or Interbay stations.
- Questions about the alignment and if it will go over or under the Dravus Street bridge.
- Questions about how much it will cost to build the tunnel to Ballard.
- Questions about why a Ballard station on the densely populated Market Street is preferred.

Downtown

Stations: Seattle Center, South Lake Union, Denny, Westlake and Midtown

- Support for stations to include public restrooms.
- Support for stations that represent the neighborhood's character.
- Support for passenger loading zones near Downtown stations.
- Support for the Seattle Center station to represent and integrate the culture of the Campus to better connect riders to the art, music and culture at the Seattle Center.
- Concerns about increased personal vehicle use in the Downtown corridor and how to advocate for use of mass transit.
- Interest in South Lake Union station planning and optimizing connections for how employees can use light rail to get to work.
- Questions about how to encourage future light rail usage to commuters who currently use other modes of transportation to get to/from Downtown.



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- Questions about how existing Downtown stations will connect to future stations and if there are plans to upgrade existing Downtown stations.
- Questions about if the new downtown transit tunnel will be a cut-and-cover tunnel.
- Questions about how riders will get to/from Key Arena from the Seattle Center station.

Chinatown-International District/SODO

Stations: Chinatown-International District and SODO

- Support for improved pedestrian routes in SODO.
- Concerns about transit-oriented development in SODO, a predominantly industrial area.
- Concerns about older buildings that are not seismically retrofitted as it relates to possible construction effects.
- Interest in learning more about community outreach plans and questions about whether there is an opportunity for non-English speaking communities to give feedback.

West Seattle

Stations: Delridge, Avalon and Alaska Junction

- Support for more communal spaces and intermodal transfers at stations.
- Support for parking and passenger load zones at stations to serve those with limited mobility and parents traveling with children.
- Support for a lower elevated guideway to feel more grounded or connected to the neighborhood.
- Support for affordable housing, grocery stores, retail and art near the Delridge station.
- Support for activating the station area and space underneath potential elevated guideways.
- Concerns about train noise once the project is operational.
- Concerns about loss of natural green space along the alignment.
- Concerns about loss of businesses in Delridge.
- Questions about the Avalon station and if it can be eliminated from the project.
- Questions about how much additional funding is needed to build the tunnels in West Seattle.
- Questions about the proposed height of the guideway across the Duwamish Waterway and in the Alaska Junction.
- Questions about which bus routes will serve each station.
- Questions about how much property will be needed for construction staging.



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Fairs and festivals

During the reporting period, the project team attended 1 festival and 1 tabling event to share information with the community, answer questions and discuss opportunities to stay engaged.

Common questions and comments

Lunar New Year Festival

Date: Feb. 8, 2020 | **Visitors:** 243

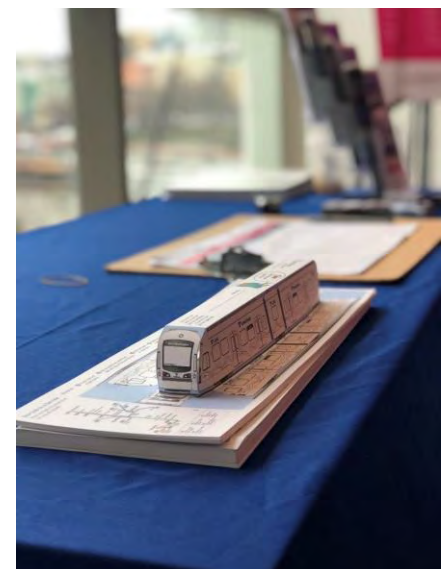
- I'm glad you're thinking about better transit connections and modes.
- Is Sound Transit collaborating with the City of Seattle on this project?
- Will light rail service extend south of the Alaska Junction to serve White Center?
- How is the project being received by the community so far?
- When will the new Downtown tunnel and Chinatown-International District station open?
- Where can I go from the new Chinatown-International District station?
- How do I qualify for an ORCA Lift card?



DSA's State of Downtown

Date: Feb. 13, 2020 | **Visitors:** 36

- Which alternatives are being studied currently?
- Are there tunnel alternatives in West Seattle?
- Concerned about pedestrian crossings on 15th and 14th avenues and NW Market Street.
- Build it quicker!
- Will I need to transfer lines when Northgate extension opens?



Top: Project booth at Lunar New Year Festival
Bottom: Paper light rail trains are a popular item for all ages!



Property owner meetings and fieldwork

During the reporting period, the project team distributed notifications about 23 fieldwork activities and attended 3 meetings with property owners.

Fieldwork

Activities

- Delivered flyers and/or conducted phone calls to stakeholders in Chinatown-International District, West Seattle, West Seattle Duwamish Waterway, SODO, Downtown, Interbay and Ballard to notify businesses and residences about geotechnical work, in-water fieldwork and historical surveys.

Property owner meetings

A few questions and comments

- Support for light rail expansion in South Lake Union with a station on Thomas Street.
- Concerns about traffic congestion near Highway 99 near the preferred South Lake Union station on Harrison Street.
- Concerns about tunneling near the existing SR-99 tunnel.
- Questions about the property acquisition process and future engagement.
- Questions about if Sound Transit can use other transportation studies done in the past to avoid duplicating analysis and help reduce project costs.
- Questions about property acquisition and construction easements in the Downtown segment.
- Questions about the cost of building a tunnel versus an at-grade or elevated structure through Downtown.
- Questions about the Ballard Link Extension construction timeline.

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