Enterprise Initiative Evaluation Report

May 2026
Enterprise Initiative

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Appendices

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This document provides an overview of the evaluation process that was used to analyze proposed approaches and recommendations for an updated Sound Transit 3 (ST3) System Plan, as part of the agency's Enterprise Initiative. The Enterprise Initiative is Sound Transit's effort to address the program affordability challenges affecting the agency's ability to fully deliver and operate the ST3 program. Sections 1 and 2 summarize the evaluation criteria and methodology used to assess three plausible, affordable approaches for updating the ST3 capital program. Section 3 describes the proposed update to the ST3 System Plan included in Resolution R2026-11.

The Board established principles, outlined in Amended Motion M2025-36, to guide the evaluation of approaches to amending the capital program:

- Advance Regional Connectivity
- Support Future Growth
- Prioritize the Passenger Experience
- Protect Public Investments with Fiscal Integrity

For each of these principles, the Enterprise Initiative team developed performance indicators using quantitative measures where data was available and ordinal ratings where precise quantification was not feasible. The three approaches developed for the March 18th Board retreat show how different themes aligned with the principles illustrate trade-offs and were intended to support decision-making for updating the plan. The themes highlighted in the approaches were:

1. Keep active light rail projects moving forward
2. Advance regional connectivity
3. Phase all light rail extension projects to advance other ST3 elements

The results of the evaluation were presented to the Board at the March 18, 2026 retreat and were considered in the development of the proposed approach to update the ST3 System Plan.

1.2 Project assumptions across capital program approaches

Since the 2021 ST3 Program Realignment, planning, design, and construction have advanced across the ST3 program, adjusting the list of ST3 projects considered for the proposed system plan update. All projects that have been baselined are proceeding with the approved scopes, schedules, and budgets.

The following tables list the projects which are assumed to be maintained or deferred in the three approaches. This section also includes a list of projects which are assumed to be deferred in Approaches 1 and 2, but not in Approach 3.

1.2.1 Projects maintained in all capital program approaches

Some projects were maintained in all capital program approaches because they are necessary for system operations. Notable projects necessary for the operation of the entire system are operations and maintenance facilities for all modes and the purchase of the Series 3 Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs).

Project	Corridor
Link	
Tacoma Dome access improvements	South
Operations and Maintenance Facility North	Systemwide
Operations and Maintenance Facility South	Systemwide
Series 3 LRVs	Systemwide
Sounder	
Sounder maintenance base	Systemwide
ST Express and other projects	
ST Express fleet renewal	Systemwide
ST Express bus Operations and Maintenance Facility	Systemwide
Future System Planning	
ST4 and High-Capacity Transit (HCT) Planning	Systemwide

1.2.2 Projects deferred in all capital program approaches

Projects deferred in all approaches are primarily parking and access projects which were previously delayed in the 2021 realignment process.

Project	Corridor
Sounder	
Sounder South platform extensions	South
South King and Pierce Sounder South station access	South
Edmonds and Mukilteo station access and parking	North
ST Express and other projects	
Bus on shoulder	Systemwide
North Sammamish Parking	East
SR 162 Corridor Investment	South

1.2.3 Projects deferred or maintained in different capital program approaches

Project	Corridor	Approach 1 & 2	Approach 3
Stride delayed parking	North & East	Defer	Maintain
Tacoma Dome Link Extension delayed parking	South	Defer	Maintain
Everett Link Extension delayed parking	North	Defer	Maintain

Parking projects are maintained in Approach 3 because phased delivery of the Everett and Tacoma Link Extension projects will increase the need for alternative forms of station access.

1.2.4 Projects considered for modifications in the capital program approaches

Major capital projects were considered for modifications as part of the Enterprise Initiative and the changes to these projects varied by approach.

Project	Corridor
Link	
West Seattle Link Extension	Central
Ballard Link Extension	Central
Everett Link Extension	North
Tacoma Dome Link Extension	South
South Kirkland-Issaquah Link Extension	East
Tacoma Link Extension	South
Graham Street Infill Station	Central
Boeing Access Road Infill Station	South
Sounder	
Sounder South Capacity Expansion	South
DuPont Extension	South

Projects considered for modifications

2 APPROACH EVALUATION

2.1 Adopted criteria and evaluation methodology

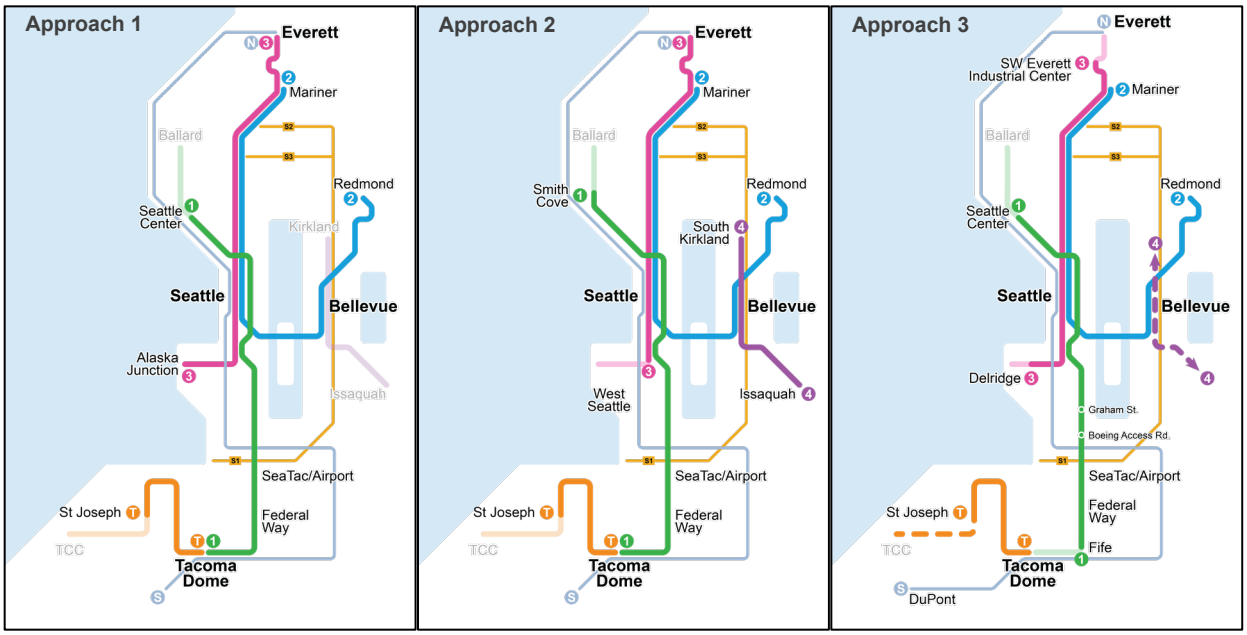
This section describes the approaches and metrics that were used for the evaluation. The evaluation metrics were informed by principles established by the Board in Motion M2025-36. The table below defines the methods and indicators for each criterion, and the tables that follow present measures for each Approach. An appendix provides supplemental information for a subset of the criteria.

Criterion	Methodology	Performance Indicator
Advance Regional Connectivity: Spine completion *Is the full regional Link light rail spine (Everett Station to Tacoma Dome) completed?*	This measure identifies whether the approach completes the regional Link light rail spine from Everett Station to Tacoma Dome Station.	Binary (Yes or No)
Advance Regional Connectivity: Regional centers served by rail *How many additional regional centers are connected by ST rail (Link, Sounder, T Line)?*	This measure identifies the number of Puget Sound Regional Council Regional Growth Centers and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers served by Link, Sounder, or T Line in the approach. There are a total of 36 regional/manufacturing centers within the Sound Transit service area, 17 of which are currently served by rail. A full list of these regional centers can be found in Appendix A.	Number of regional centers connected
Support Future Growth: Daily Sound Transit rail riders *How many daily riders on ST rail (Link, Sounder, T Line) will there be?*	This measure uses data from ridership forecasts based on the Sound Transit ridership model (in horizon year 2050) to assess the number of projected daily Link and Sounder riders.	Number of daily riders
Support Future Growth: Population & jobs with access to rail *How many additional people will have access to ST rail (Link, Sounder, T Line)?*	This measure identifies how well each approach serves future populations based on a demographic analysis within ½ mile radius of station areas. Total population and jobs numbers are combined. Source: Puget Sound Regional Council's Land Use Vision – Implemented Targets/VISION 2050 projections.	Number of people and jobs

Criterion	Methodology	Performance Indicator
Support Future Growth: Zero-vehicle households with access to rail *How many additional households without vehicles will have access to Sound Transit rail (Link, Sounder, T Line)?*	This measure identifies how well each approach serves people without access to a vehicle, and who depend on transit for mobility, within ½ mile radius of station areas. *Source: 2023 American Community Survey.*	Number of zero-vehicle households
Passenger Experience: Regional travel time reduction *How much more quickly can people travel by transit around the region?*	This measure examines transit travel times between Regional Centers (defined in the previous criterion), comparing the difference in travel time from 2030 to 2050 for the proposed approach. Transit travel time difference is multiplied by the total travel volume for each origin-destination pair to weight savings by demand.	Ordinal rating of outcomes (high, medium, low)
Fiscal Integrity: Program competitiveness *How competitive is this approach when applying for federal grants?*	This measure identifies if Sound Transit plans to pursue outside funding for projects in the approach and if the projects are expected to be competitive for a significant portion of outside funding.	Ordinal rating of outcomes (high, medium, low)
Fiscal Integrity: Project readiness *How soon can construction begin in this approach?*	This measure identifies how soon projects in the approach can begin construction.	Ordinal rating of outcomes (high, medium, low)

2.2 Three approaches considered as part of the Enterprise Initiative

Three plausible, affordable capital program approaches were presented to the Board in March 2026, each reflecting a different set of project adjustments. These reflected different points of emphasis to highlight how different trade-offs and priorities could be incorporated into a revised capital program.



The three illustrative approaches to adjusting the ST3 capital program. Dashed lines indicate that final alignment is not confirmed. Light lines indicate deferred projects.

A full comparison of the different projects and their adjustments for each approach is shown below.

Projects	ST3 Baseline	Approach 1: Keep active light rail extension projects moving	Approach 2: Advance regional connectivity	Approach 3: Phase all light rail extension projects to advance other ST3 elements
West Seattle Link Extension	Construct to Alaska Junction (4 stations)	Construct to Alaska Junction, without Avalon (3 stations)	Defer final design and construction	Construct to Delridge (2 stations)
Ballard Link Extension	Construct to Ballard (10 stations)	Complete planning & 30% design on full project; construct to Seattle Center, without South Lake Union (6 stations)	Complete planning & 30% design on full project; construct to Smith Cove, without South Lake Union (7 stations)	Complete planning & 30% design on full project; construct to Seattle Center, without South Lake Union (6 stations)

Projects	ST3 Baseline	Approach 1: Keep active light rail extension projects moving	Approach 2: Advance regional connectivity	Approach 3: Phase all light rail extension projects to advance other ST3 elements
Everett Link Extension	Construct to Everett (6 stations)	Construct to Everett (6 stations)	Construct to Everett (6 stations)	Complete planning & 30% design on full project; construct to SW Everett Industrial Center (3 stations)
Tacoma Dome Link Extension	Construct to Tacoma Dome (4 stations)	Construct to Tacoma Dome (4 stations)	Construct to Tacoma Dome (4 stations)	Complete planning & 30% design on full project; construct to Fife (2 stations)
South Kirkland-Issaquah Extension	Construct South Kirkland to Issaquah (4 stations)	Complete planning & 30% design, defer final design and construction	Construct entire project (4 stations)	Complete planning & 30% design on full project; construct initial phase (stations TBD)
Tacoma Link Extension	Construct to Tacoma Community College (6 stations)	Defer	Defer	Complete planning & 30% design on full project; construct initial phase (stations TBD)
Graham Infill Station	Construct	Complete planning & 30% design; defer final design and construction	Complete planning & 30% design; defer final design and construction	Complete construction
Boeing Access Infill Station	Construct	Complete planning & 30% design; defer final design and construction	Complete planning & 30% design; defer final design and construction	Complete construction
Sounder South Capacity Expansion	Implement	Maintain	Maintain	Maintain
DuPont Extension	Construct to DuPont (2 stations)	Defer	Defer	Maintain

2.3 Evaluation summary of the three approaches

The following table summarizes the outcomes of the evaluation of the three approaches as well as a comparison to the ST3 Baseline.

Board Principles	ST3 Baseline	Approach 1: Keep active light rail extension projects moving	Approach 2: Advance regional connectivity	Approach 3: Phase all light rail extension projects to advance other ST3 elements
Advance Regional Connectivity: **Spine completion**	Yes (Everett to Tacoma Dome)	Yes (Everett to Tacoma Dome)	Yes (Everett to Tacoma Dome)	No (SW Everett Ind. to Fife)
Advance Regional Connectivity: **Regional centers served by rail**	+8	+4	+6	+4
Support Future Growth: **Daily Sound Transit rail riders**[1]	630,000	550,000 (87% baseline)	550,000 (87% baseline)	540,000 (86% baseline)
Support Future Growth: **Population & jobs with access to rail**	+430,000	+280,000 (66% baseline)	+310,000 (72% baseline)	+300,000 (70% baseline)
Support Future Growth: **Zero-vehicle households with access to rail**	+13,000	+9,100 (71% baseline)	+8,800 (68% baseline)	8,800 (68% baseline)
Passenger Experience: **Regional travel time reduction**	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Fiscal Integrity: **Program competitiveness**	Not applicable	High	Medium	Low
Fiscal Integrity: **Project readiness**	Not applicable	High	Low	Medium

Notes:
1. 2050 ridership forecasts developed from 2024 ST3 Sound Transit ridership model results

3 PROPOSED ST3 AFFORDABLE PLAN

3.1 Process to develop a proposed ST3 affordable plan

Per the direction of the Board at the November 18, 2025 Board retreat, three plausible approaches were developed, evaluated, and shared with the Board at a retreat on March 18, 2026. The Board discussed the trade-offs associated with the approaches at the retreat and provided feedback and direction to the Sound Transit Enterprise Initiative team related to analyses and project priorities.

The Board expressed a desire to keep projects moving within available resources, advance project planning, pursue cost savings where appropriate, and continue expanding transit access across region, direction consistent with the guiding principles established in M2025-36. The Enterprise Initiative team developed a proposed ST3 System Plan Update based on the feedback and direction of the Board, as shown in Resolution R2026-11.

3.2 Proposed affordable plan

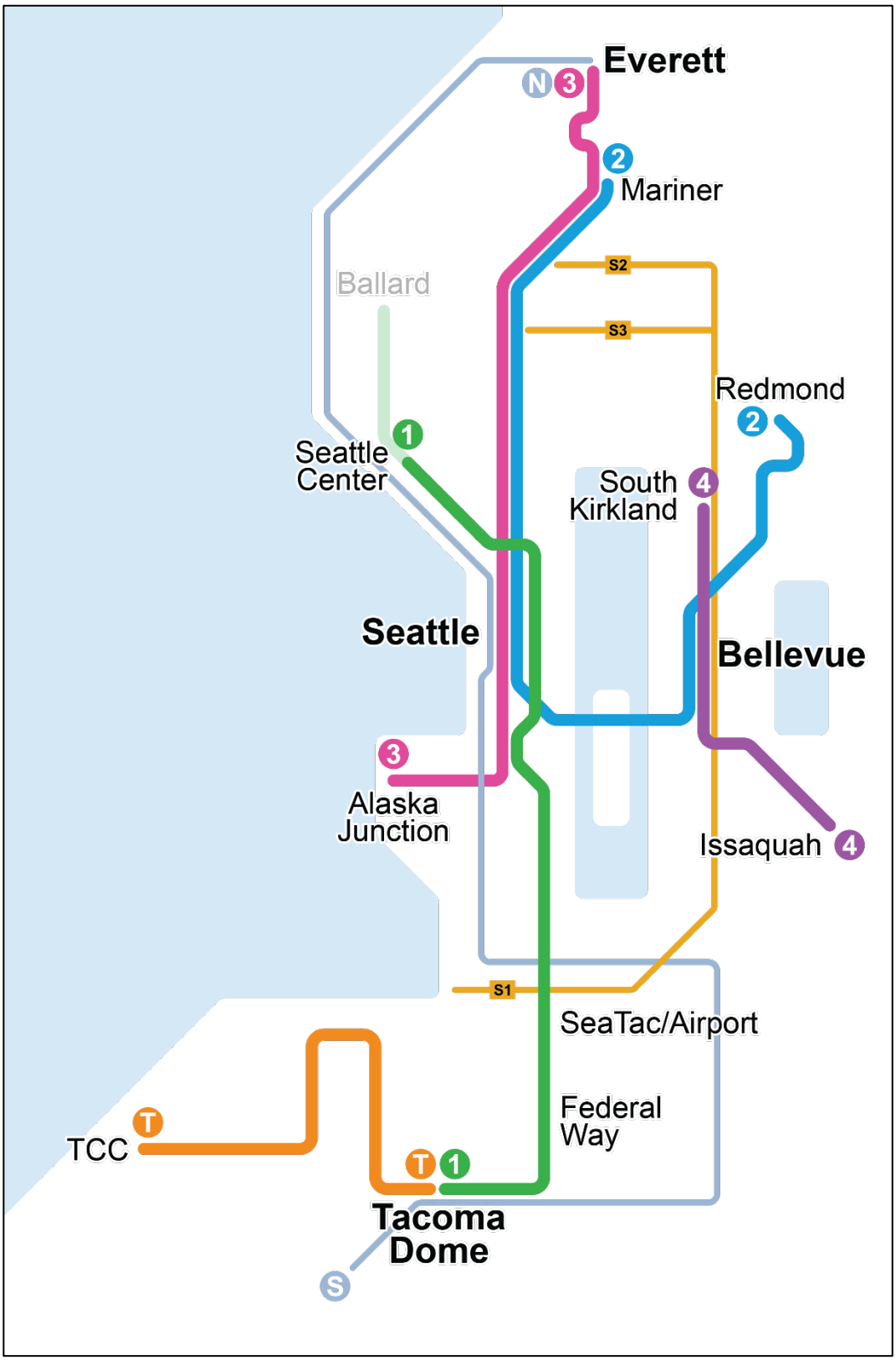
The table below outlines the proposed affordable plan in R2026-11 by project. It is illustrated in the diagram following the table. All projects that include a modification from the ST3 Baseline are denoted as a shaded row.

Projects	ST3 Baseline	Affordable Plan per R2026-11
Link		
West Seattle Link Extension	Construct to Alaska Junction	Construct to Alaska Junction, no Avalon Station
Ballard Link Extension	Construct to Ballard	Complete planning & final design on full project; construct to Seattle Center
Everett Link Extension	Construct to Everett	Construct as planned
Tacoma Dome Link Extension	Construct to Tacoma Dome	Construct as planned
South Kirkland to Issaquah Link Extension	Construct South Kirkland to Issaquah	Construct South Kirkland to Issaquah based on 2024 long-range financial plan cost projections
T Line to Tacoma Community College Extension	Construct to Tacoma Community College	Construct to Tacoma Community College based on 2024 long-range financial plan cost projections
Graham Street Station	Construct station	Fund planning & final design; defer construction

Projects	ST3 Baseline	Affordable Plan per R2026-11
Boeing Access Road Station	Construct station	Fund planning & final design; defer construction
Tacoma Dome Access Improvements	Improved access to Tacoma Dome Station including safety projects and potentially parking	Construct as planned (in partnership with the City of Tacoma)
Operations and Maintenance Facility North	Link facility connected to the Everett Link alignment	Construct as planned
Operations and Maintenance Facility South	Link facility located along the Tacoma Dome extension just south of Federal Way	Construct as planned
Series 3 LRVs	Purchase of new LRVs to support the expanded system	Confirm and purchase the number LRVs needed to support the updated System Plan
Sounder		
Sounder South Capacity Expansion	Implement	Improvements and service levels to be determined aligning with a reduced budget allocation
DuPont Extension	Construct to DuPont	Complete planning & 30% design; defer final design and construction
Sounder Maintenance Base	Operations & maintenance facility for Sounder in Lakewood	Construct as planned
Sounder South platform extensions	Extend station platforms to accommodate up to 10-car trains	Deferred
South King and Pierce Sounder South station access improvements	Access improvements for Sounder South stations	Deferred
Edmonds and Mukilteo station access and parking	Parking and access improvements for Sounder North stations	Deferred
ST Express and other projects		
ST Express fleet renewal	Bus purchases to continue operating ST Express	Confirm and purchase the number of buses needed to support the updated System Plan
ST Express bus Operations and Maintenance Facility	Operations & maintenance facility for bus service in the southern half of the region	Define facility capacity and functions to align with a reduced budget allocation

Projects	ST3 Baseline	Affordable Plan per R2026-11
Bus on shoulder	Investments to support additional bus on shoulder operations through the region	Deferred
North Sammamish Parking	New Park & Ride in Sammamish	Deferred
SR 162 Corridor Investment	Improvements to SR 162 to support improved bus service and connections to Sumner Sounder Station	Deferred
Stride, Tacoma Dome Extension, and Everrett Extension delayed parking	Parking investments at key stations	Deferred
Future Planning		
ST4 and High-Capacity Transit Planning	Planning for future High-Capacity Transit (HCT) corridors and a potential ST4 Plan	Scope of planning effort to be prioritized to align with a reduced budget allocation

Map of the proposed affordable plan per R2026-11



3.3 Performance of the affordable plan per R2026-11

Board Principles	ST3 Baseline	Affordable Plan per R2026-11
Advance Regional Connectivity: **Spine completion**	Yes (Everett to Tacoma Dome)	Yes (Everett to Tacoma Dome)
Advance Regional Connectivity: **Regional centers served by rail**	+8 (more than current system)	+6 (more than current system)
Support Future Growth: **Daily Sound Transit rail riders**[1]	650,000	600,000 (91% baseline)
Support Future Growth: **Population & jobs with access to rail**	+430,000	+360,000 (84% baseline)
Support Future Growth: **Zero-vehicle households with access to rail**	+13,000	+10,000 (77% baseline)
Passenger Experience: **Regional travel time reduction**	High	Medium
Fiscal Integrity: **Program competitiveness**	Not applicable	High
Fiscal Integrity: **Project readiness**	Not applicable	High

Notes:
1. 2050 ridership forecasts developed from updated Sound Transit ridership modeling that occurred as part of the Enterprise Initiative workplan during April 2026. The Enterprise Initiative ridership analysis was completed for the ST3 Baseline as well as the proposed approach outlined in R2026-11.

Appendix A: Additional information for regional centers served by rail

Regional Centers were defined using all the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Urban and Metro Growth Centers and Employment and Growth Manufacturing/Industrial Centers within the Sound Transit service area. The region has designated 30 Regional Growth Centers. These are locations of the region's most significant business, governmental, and cultural facilities and are planning for growth. Ten regional Manufacturing/Industrial Centers are also designated, which are locations for more intensive industrial activity. Four of these regional centers are outside of the Sound Transit service area and are not considered.

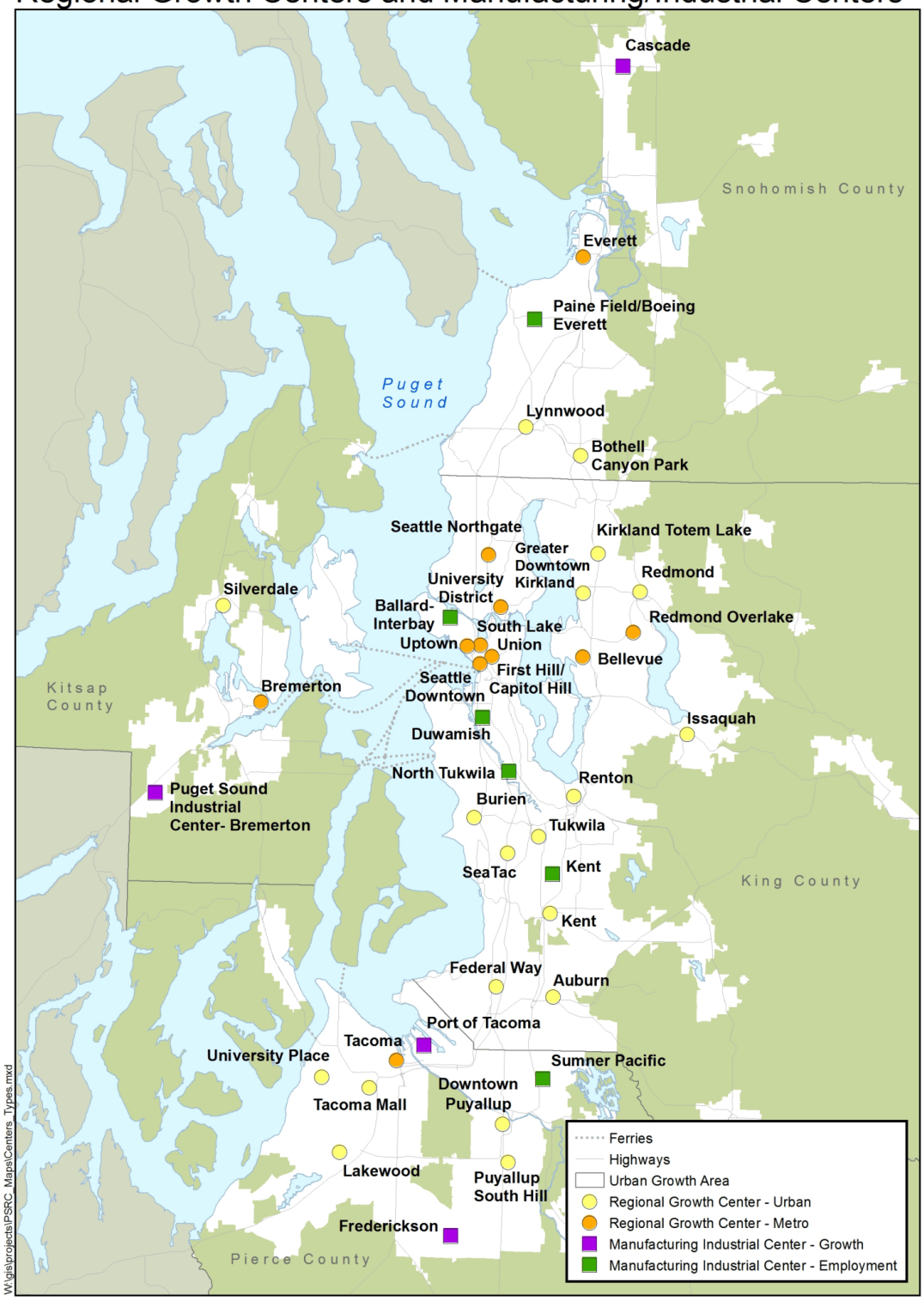
Of the 36 total Regional Centers within the Sound Transit service area, 17 are currently served by Sound Transit rail (Link, Sounder, or T Line). The ST3 Baseline would add eight more; the proposed approach adds six.

The full list of Regional Centers is as follows, and a map is shown on the following page:

Regional center	Type	Existing Rail Service
Auburn	Urban Regional Growth Center	Yes
Bellevue	Metro Regional Growth Center	Yes
Bothell Canyon Park	Urban Regional Growth Center	
Burien	Urban Regional Growth Center	
Everett	Urban Regional Growth Center	Yes
Everett Paine Field/Boeing	Employment Manufacturing/Industrial Center	
Federal Way	Urban Regional Growth Center	Yes
Frederickson	Growth Manufacturing/Industrial Center	
Issaquah	Urban Regional Growth Center	
Kent	Urban Regional Growth Center	Yes
Kent MIC	Employment Manufacturing/Industrial Center	
Downtown Kirkland	Urban Regional Growth Center	
Kirkland Totem Lake	Urban Regional Growth Center	
Lakewood	Urban Regional Growth Center	

Regional center	Type	Existing Rail Service
Lynnwood	Urban Regional Growth Center	Yes
Puyallup Downtown	Urban Regional Growth Center	Yes
Puyallup South Hill	Urban Regional Growth Center	
Redmond Downtown	Urban Regional Growth Center	Yes
Redmond-Overlake	Metro Regional Growth Center	Yes
Renton	Urban Regional Growth Center	
SeaTac	Urban Regional Growth Center	Yes
Seattle Ballard-Interbay	Employment Manufacturing/Industrial Center	
Seattle Downtown	Metro Regional Growth Center	Yes
Seattle Duwamish	Employment Manufacturing/Industrial Center	Yes
Seattle First Hill/Capitol Hill	Metro Regional Growth Center	Yes
Seattle Northgate	Urban Regional Growth Center	Yes
Seattle South Lake Union	Metro Regional Growth Center	
Seattle University District	Metro Regional Growth Center	Yes
Seattle Uptown	Metro Regional Growth Center	
Sumner Pacific	Employment Manufacturing/Industrial Center	
Tacoma Downtown	Metro Regional Growth Center	Yes
Tacoma Mall	Urban Regional Growth Center	
Tacoma Port of Tacoma	Growth Manufacturing/Industrial Center	
Tukwila	Urban Regional Growth Center	Yes
Tukwila North Tukwila	Employment Manufacturing/Industrial Center	
University Place	Urban Regional Growth Center	

Regional Growth Centers and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers



Source: Puget Sound Regional Council

Approach	Number of new regional centers	New regional centers served
ST3 Baseline	**Eight (8)**	• Paine Field MIC • Issaquah • Ballard-Interbay MIC • South Lake Union • Uptown • Port of Tacoma MIC • North Tukwila MIC • University Place
Approach 1 Keep active light rail extension projects moving	**Four (4)**	• Paine Field MIC • South Lake Union • Uptown • Port of Tacoma MIC
Approach 2 Advance regional connectivity	**Six (6)**	• Paine Field MIC • Issaquah • Ballard-Interbay MIC • South Lake Union • Uptown • Port of Tacoma MIC
Approach 3 Phase all light rail extension projects to advance other ST3 elements	**Four (4)**	• Paine Field MIC • South Lake Union • Uptown • North Tukwila MIC
Affordable plan per R2026-11	**Six (6)**	• Paine Field MIC • Issaquah • South Lake Union • Uptown • Port of Tacoma • University Place

Appendix B: Additional information for program competitiveness and project readiness

The following tables provide additional information around the Program Competitiveness and Project Readiness evaluations of the various approaches that were presented to the Board during the March 18th, 2026 retreat.

Table 1: Additional information about the evaluation of program competitiveness

Approach	Program Competitiveness	Additional Information
Approach 1 Keep active light rail extension projects moving	**High**	**Approach 1 assumes approx. $17B in total Capital Investment Grants (CIG) funding through 2046.** Adds Systemwide Core Capacity grant in later years of plan. Increased West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) grant amount due to "Medium" New Starts rating (rating criteria changed in Nov 2025 and now the project is expected to get a "Medium").
Approach 2 Advance regional connectivity	**Medium**	**Approach 2 assumes approx. $16B in total CIG funding through 2046.** Adds Systemwide Core Capacity grant in later years of plan. Replaces WSLE with South–Kirkland Issaquah (SKI) Link. SKI is assumed to be only eligible for Expedited Project Delivery (EPD) (limited to 25% federal share) due to risk of not getting a "Medium" New Starts rating. This slightly reduces the total CIG grant funding from $17B to $16B.
Approach 3 Phase all light rail extension projects to advance other ST3 elements	**Low**	**Approach 3 assumes approx. $15B in total CIG funding through 2046.** Adds Systemwide Core Capacity grant in later years of plan. Phasing projects might reduce the New Starts rating for multiple projects to "Low." A "Low" New Starts rating makes projects eligible only for EPD funding, which has a lower (25%) federal share.
Affordable plan per R2026-11	**High**	**The Affordable plan per R2026-11 extends the plan period and assumes approx. $20.65B in total CIG funding.**

Table 2: Additional information about the evaluation of project readiness

Approach	Project Readiness	Additional information
Approach 1 Keep active light rail extension projects moving	**High**	The projects in this Approach have the highest level of design completion and are furthest along in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process (i.e. either have a record of decision (ROD) or have started the NEPA process).
Approach 2 Advance regional connectivity	**Low**	The projects in this Approach have a lower level of design completion and are not as far along in the NEPA process or have not started the NEPA process.
Approach 3 Phase all light rail extension projects to advance other ST3 elements	**Medium**	The projects in this Approach have a medium level of design completion overall and most, but not all, projects have at least started the NEPA process.
Affordable plan per R2026-11	**High**	Consistent with Approach 1, this plan maintains momentum for projects that are furthest along in the environmental process and design and closest to moving into construction. In addition, it commits to advancing projects not yet in planning.

Appendix C: Additional information for travel times

The following table provides the transit travel times between regional destinations that were used to calculate the travel time savings for each of the approaches. These travel times were weighted by the demand for total travel between each of the origin-destination pairs to compare the total travel time savings between the different approaches.

The transit travel times for the affordable plan are also shown. All times below are shown in minutes.

Travel Segment	ST3 Base Travel Time	Approach 1 Travel Time	Approach 2 Travel Time	Approach 3 Travel Time	Affordable plan per R2026-11
Seattle Downtown – Ballard	16	34	27	34	34
Seattle Downtown – West Seattle	23	22	30	30	22
Seattle Uptown – Ballard	12	22	24	22	22
Bellevue – Issaquah	21	32	21	32	21
Bellevue – Ballard	51	66	62	66	66
West Seattle – Ballard	44	56	62	62	56
Seattle Uptown – West Seattle	35	34	39	39	34
Issaquah – Redmond	42	50	42	50	42
Issaquah – Seattle Downtown	45	47	45	47	45
Bellevue – West Seattle	41	40	51	51	40
Seattle Downtown – Tacoma	70	67	67	83	67
Redmond – Ballard	69	84	80	84	84

Travel Segment	ST3 Base Travel Time	Approach 1 Travel Time	Approach 2 Travel Time	Approach 3 Travel Time	Affordable plan per R2026-11
Everett – Seattle Downtown	66	66	66	78	66
Issaquah – Seattle Uptown	57	59	57	59	57