

West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions

Sound Transit Board

June 23, 2022



Why we're here today

- Receive overview of Draft EIS comments
- No action today

Presentation

- 1) Community engagement and collaboration
- 2) Overview of Draft EIS comments
- 3) Next Steps

***Community engagement and
collaboration***



ST3
APPROVED

2016



PLANNING



DES

2017–2019

Alternatives development

- ✓ Feb–March 2018: Early scoping
- ✓ Feb–April 2019: Scoping
- ✓ May–Oct 2019: Board identified preferred alternatives and other DEIS alternatives

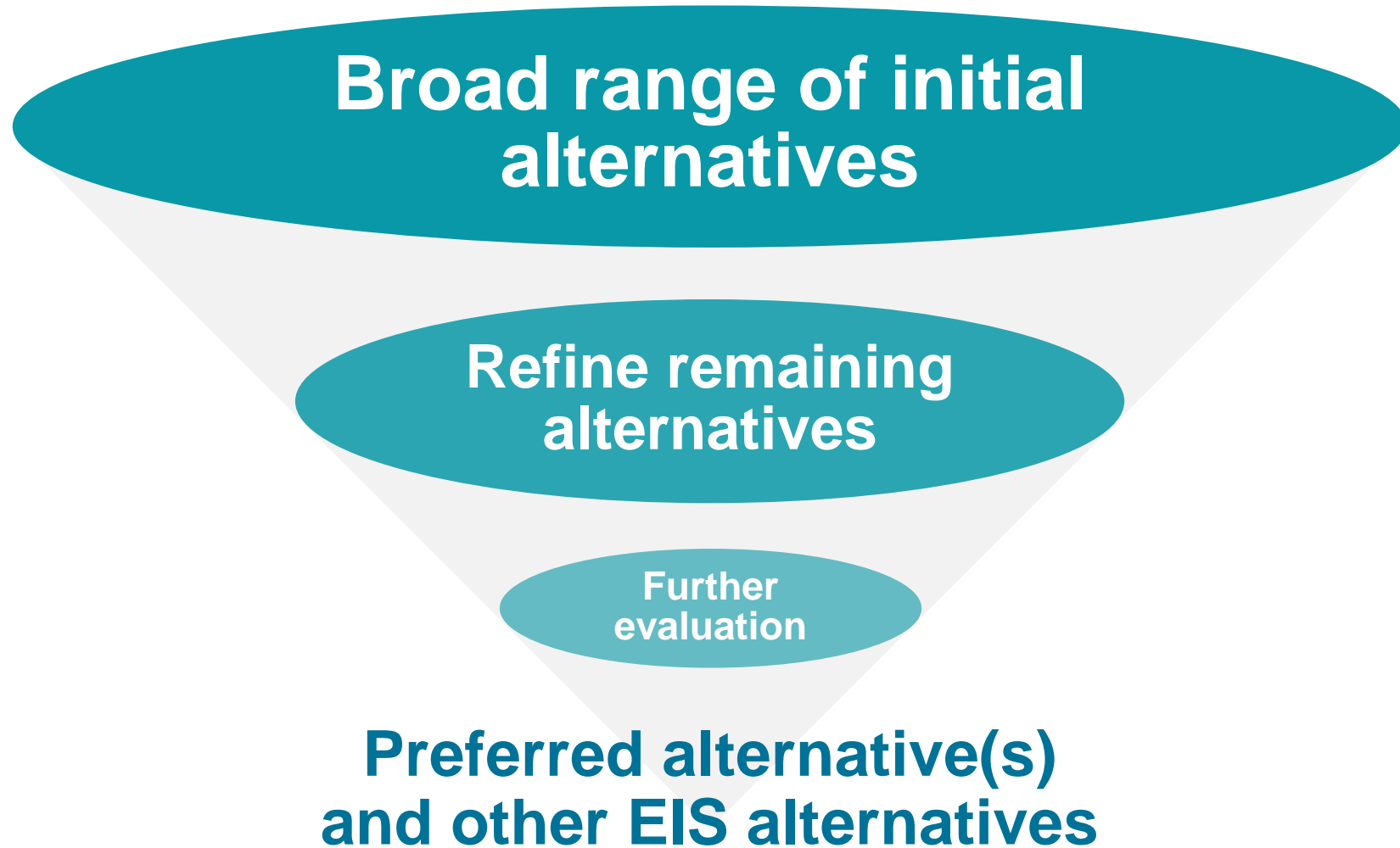
2019–2023

Environmental review

- Early 2022: Publish Draft EIS
- Public comment period
- Board confirms or modifies preferred alternatives
- 2023: Publish Final EIS
- Board selects projects to be built
- Federal Record of Decision

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Alternatives development screening process



Draft EIS alternatives

What we're studying in this phase

- Preferred Alternatives
- Preferred Alternatives with Third-Party Funding
- Other Draft EIS alternatives

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





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PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Draft EIS comment period



**Published Draft EIS
January 28, 2022**



**Comment period
ended April 28, 2022**



Building public awareness

Expanding light rail in Seattle

Comment now on potential routes and station locations

Build your future

Fidinta tareenka fudud ee Seattle

Ka faallooda hadda waddooyinka suurtagalka ah iyo goobaha saldhigyada

Dhis mustaqbalkaaga

SOUNDTRANSIT

Mở rộng đường sắt hạng nhẹ ở Seattle

Hãy đóng góp ý kiến về các tuyến đường và vị trí trạm tiềm năng

Xây dựng tương lai của bạn

Seattle 輕軌擴建

請立即發表您對潛在的路線及車站位置的意見

打造您的未來

SOUNDTRANSIT

Sound Transit #VaccinateWA - @SoundTransit · Mar 3

Check it out! ** Learn more about the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions project and how to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): wsblink.participate.online

337 views 0:31 / 0:59

Help shape the future of light rail in Seattle

West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions

This project will provide fast, reliable light rail connections to dense residential and job centers throughout the region. 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 3 Plan, funding for which was approved by voters in 2016.

The West Seattle Link Extension includes stations serving SODO, Delridge, Avalon, and Alaska Junction. The Ballard Link Extension includes stations serving Chinatown-International District, Midtown, Westlake, Denny, South Lake Union, Seattle Center, Smith Cove, Interbay, and Ballard.

Comment by April 28, 2022 on proposed routes and station locations:

wsblink.participate.online

Attend a public meeting to learn about the project's potential benefits and impacts and provide feedback on the Draft EIS analysis.

VIRTUAL March 15 Ballard, Interbay and Smith Cove routes and stations Tuesday, March 15 5:30-7:30 pm Presentation and public hearing	IN-PERSON* March 17 All routes and stations 401 S Jackson St, Seattle Thursday, March 17 12:00-7:00 pm Open house Interpreters available	VIRTUAL March 22 Seattle Center, South Lake Union, Denny, Westlake and Midtown routes and stations Tuesday, March 22 5:30-7:30 pm Presentation and public hearing
VIRTUAL March 24 Chinatown-Int'l District and SODO routes and stations Tuesday, March 24 5:30-7:30 pm Presentation and public hearing Interpreters available	VIRTUAL March 30 Delridge, Avalon and Alaska Junction routes and stations Wednesday, March 30 5:30-7:30 pm Presentation and public hearing	

* COVID-19 concerns prevent an in-person event. We will host a virtual event in its place, and encourage others to attend. Call 206-465-7058 or visit wsblink.participate.online for updates.

PUBLISHED: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Comment now

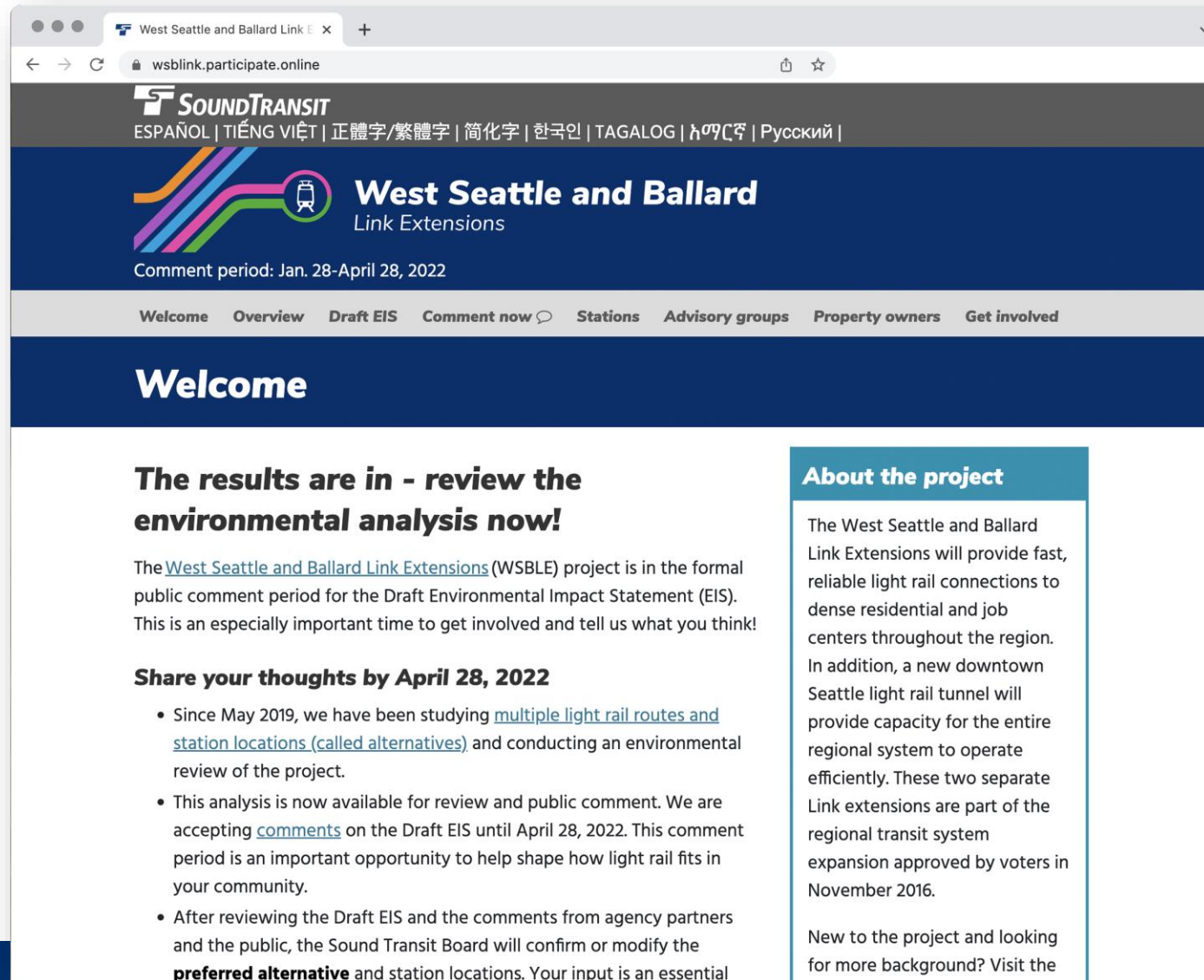
Capacity building, expanding our reach

Community liaisons focused on *CID*, *Pioneer Square* and the *Delridge* corridor, provided strategic guidance/support with:

- Door-to-door business outreach
- Engaging at community events, fairs, festivals and other tabling opportunities
- Ethnic media and community presentations
- Enhancing in-language accessibility, commenting and feedback



Adaptive, creative, accessible



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL wsblink.participate.online. The page header features the Sound Transit logo and navigation links in multiple languages: ESPAÑOL, TIẾNG VIỆT, 正體字/繁體字 | 简化字 | 한국어, TAGALOG, հոլանդերեն, and Русский. The main heading is "West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions" with a comment period of "Jan. 28-April 28, 2022". A navigation menu includes "Welcome", "Overview", "Draft EIS", "Comment now", "Stations", "Advisory groups", "Property owners", and "Get involved". The "Welcome" section contains the following text:

The results are in - review the environmental analysis now!

The [West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions](#) (WSBLE) project is in the formal public comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This is an especially important time to get involved and tell us what you think!

Share your thoughts by April 28, 2022

- Since May 2019, we have been studying [multiple light rail routes and station locations \(called alternatives\)](#) and conducting an environmental review of the project.
- This analysis is now available for review and public comment. We are accepting [comments](#) on the Draft EIS until April 28, 2022. This comment period is an important opportunity to help shape how light rail fits in your community.
- After reviewing the Draft EIS and the comments from agency partners and the public, the Sound Transit Board will confirm or modify the **preferred alternative** and station locations. Your input is an essential

The "About the project" section includes:

About the project

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.

New to the project and looking for more background? Visit the



External engagement snapshot (1/28-4/28)



5,195 Draft EIS comments



5 Draft EIS public meetings



1 online open house engaging more than
19,500 online visitors



91 community briefings,
office hours and workshops



77 property owner webinars,
office hours and meetings



12 Community Advisory Group meetings



Ads featured on **30** unique radio,
digital and print publications



38 posts on social media platforms,
with 140K+ impressions



62 Fairs, festivals and other
tabling events



8 email updates engaging more than
and blog posts **10,900** subscribers



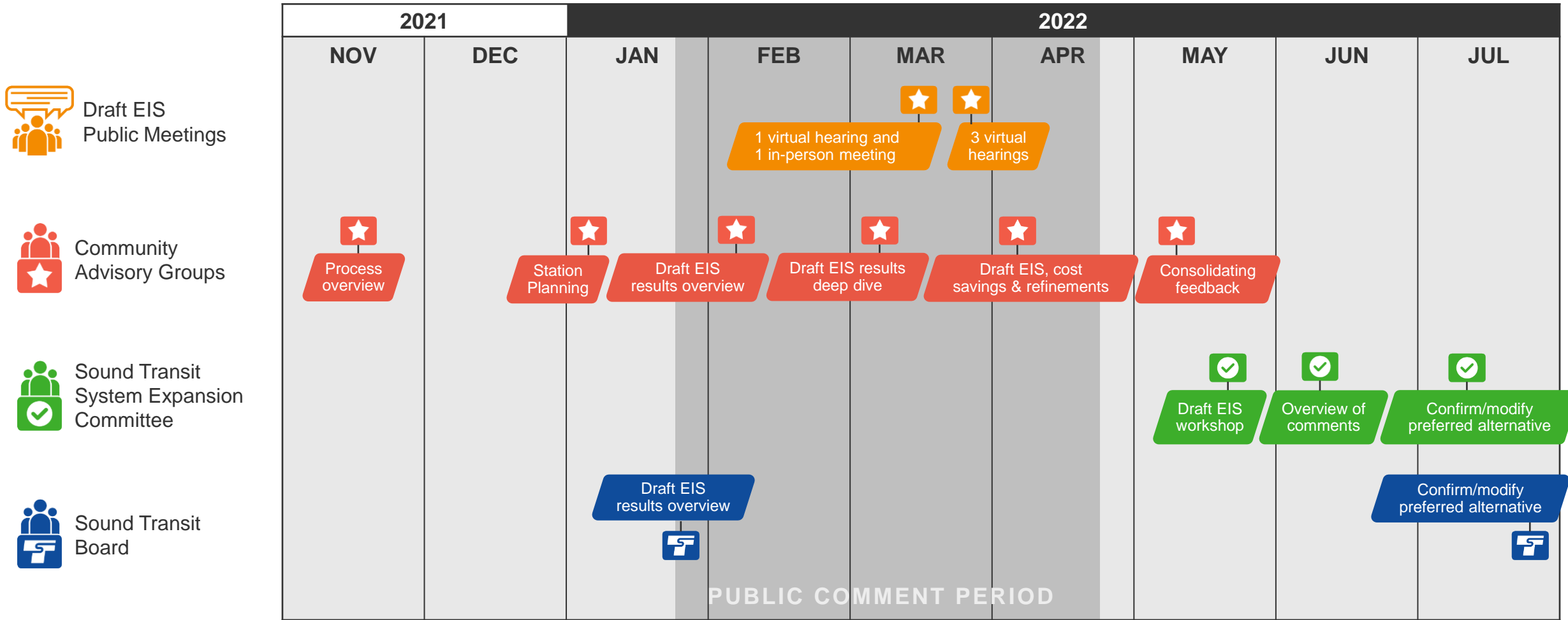
1,200+ posters delivered along
the corridor



11 Community liaisons engaging more than
280 businesses

Community engagement and collaboration

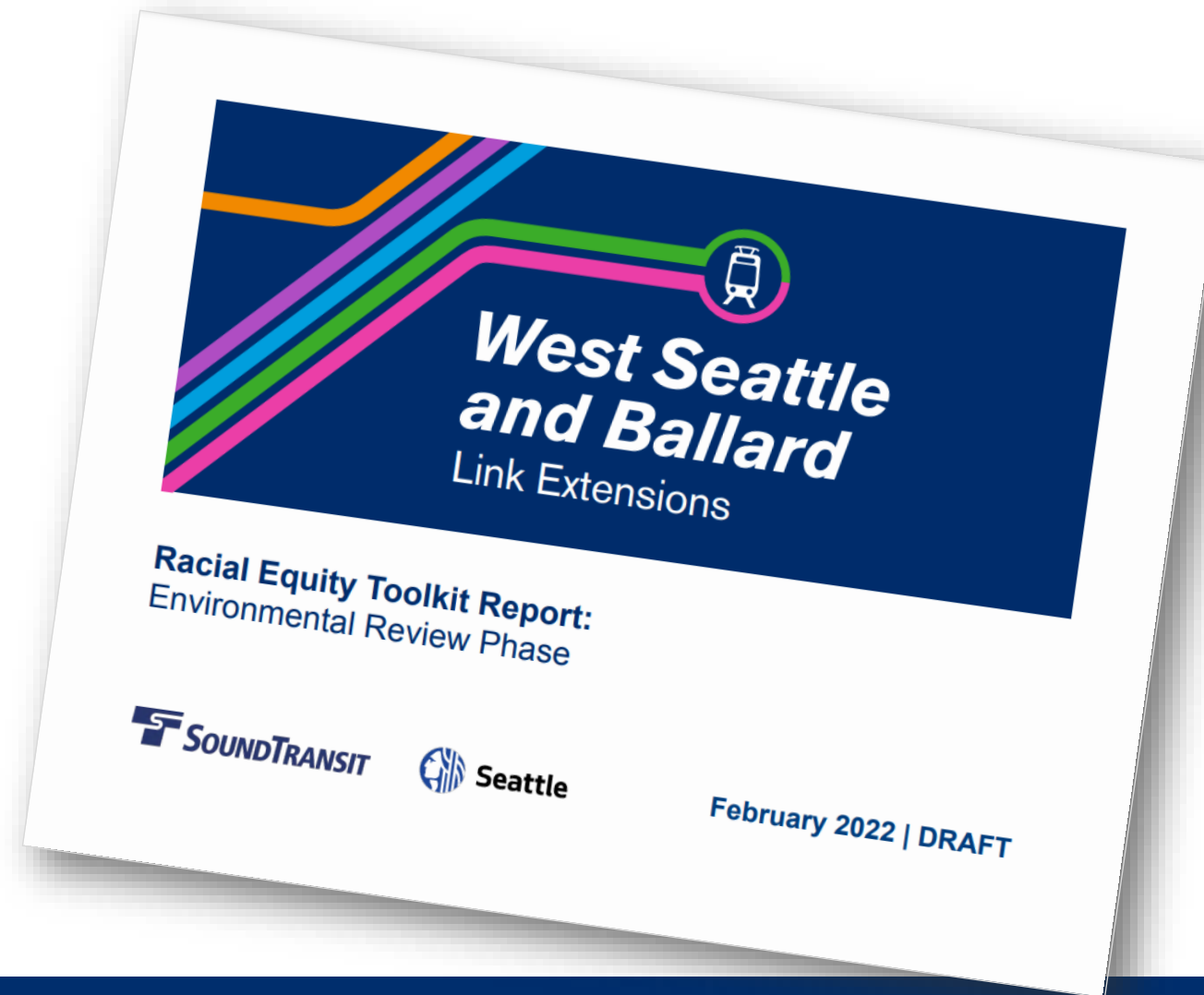
Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)



Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) Report

Environmental review

- ✓ Released as a Draft
- ✓ Sets forth RET Outcomes, for RET focus areas and corridor-wide
- ✓ Will be updated based on comments received on the Draft EIS



RET focus area outcomes

Chinatown / ID Station area

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

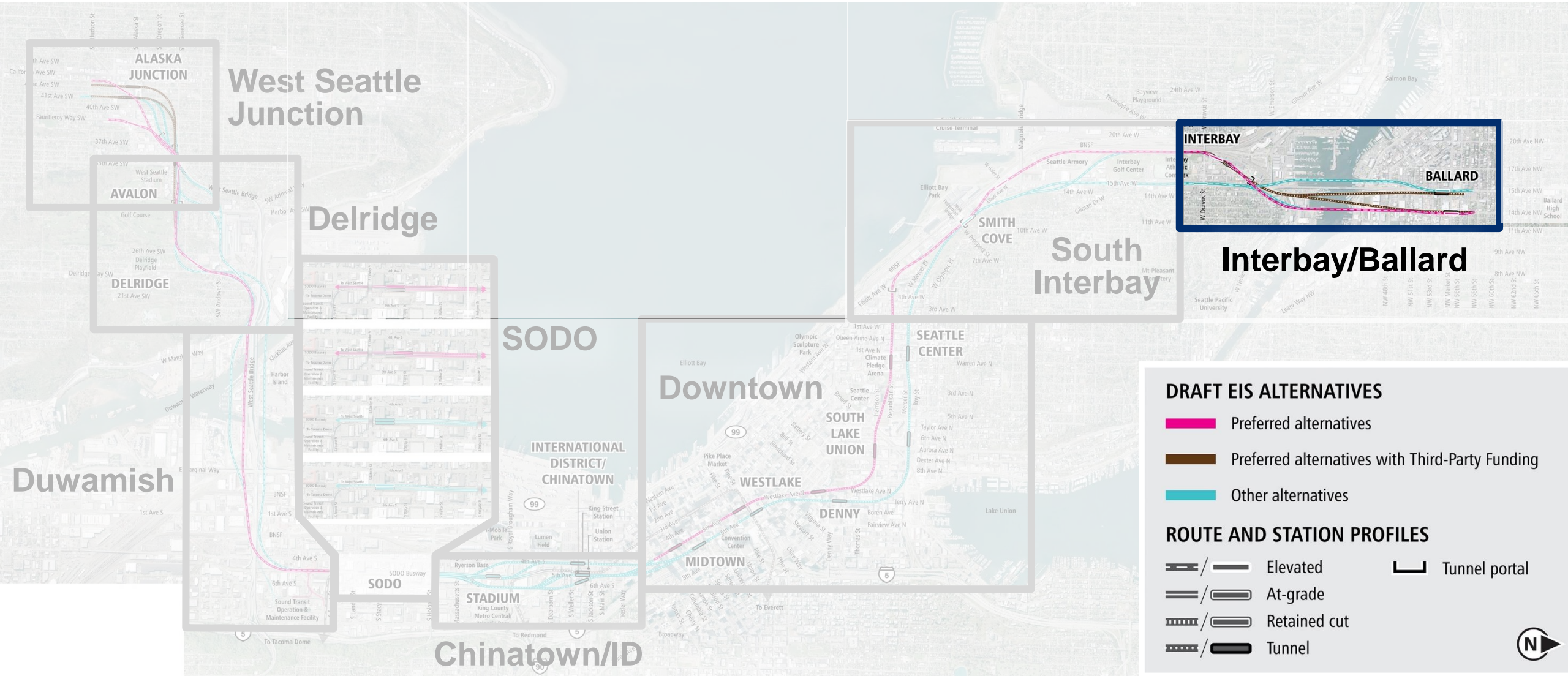
Delridge Corridor

- Excellent transfer experience including bus and rail integration and options for RET community-desired amenities provided at the station; and
- Equitable transit-oriented development.

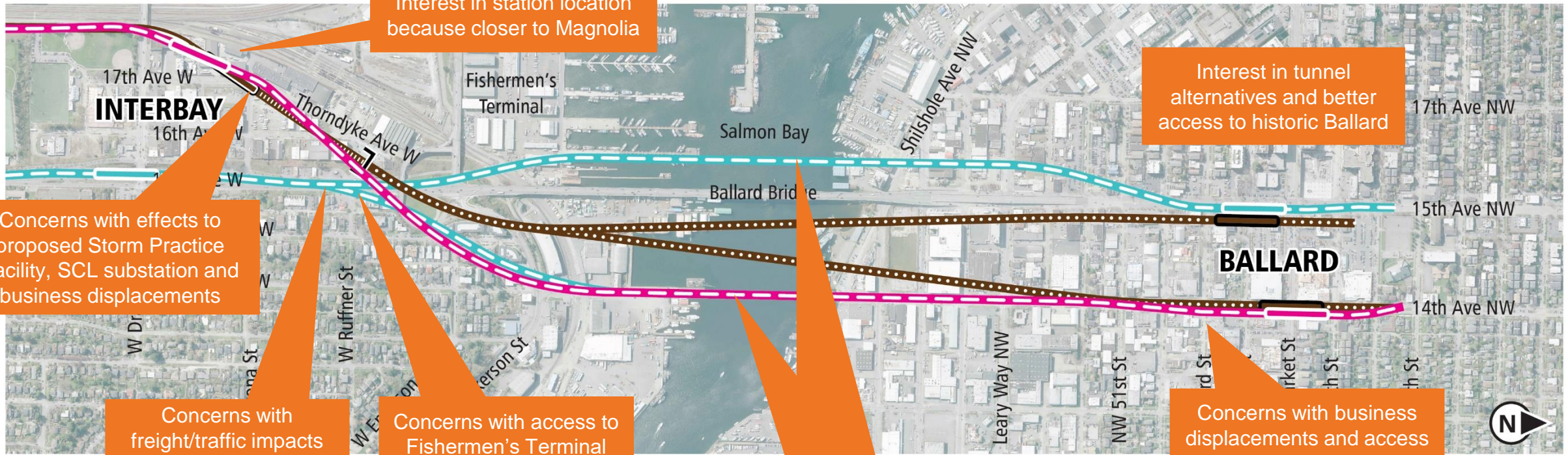


Overview of Draft EIS comments

Draft EIS alternatives



Comments



Interest in station location because closer to Magnolia

Interest in tunnel alternatives and better access to historic Ballard

Concerns with effects to proposed Storm Practice Facility, SCL substation and business displacements

Concerns with freight/traffic impacts on 15th

Concerns with access to Fishermen's Terminal

Concerns with bridge alternatives including in-water impacts, Treaty fishing rights, navigation clearances and maritime business displacements & associated effects

Concerns with business displacements and access during construction

DRAFT EIS ALTERNATIVES

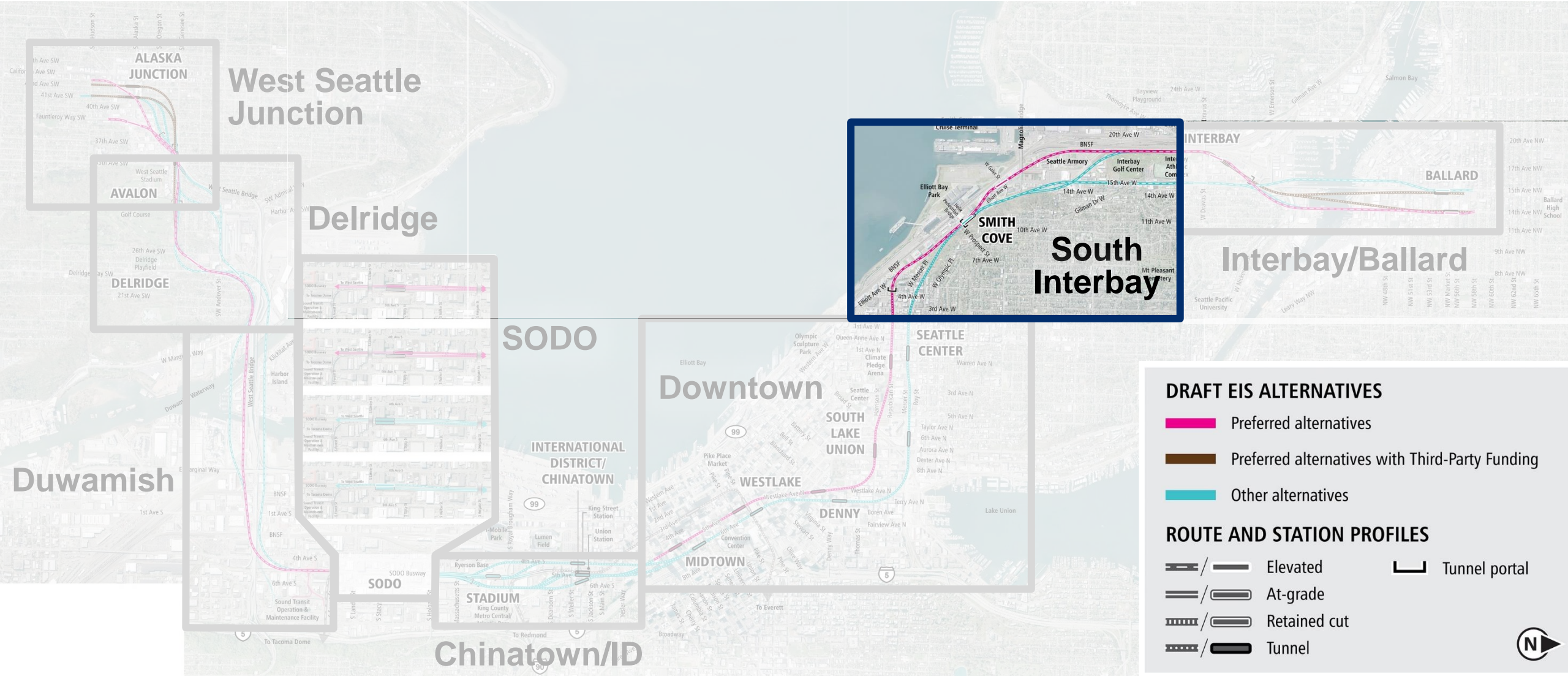
- Preferred alternatives
- Preferred alternatives with Third-Party Funding
- Other alternatives

ROUTE AND STATION PROFILES

- Elevated
- At-grade
- Retained cut
- Tunnel
- Tunnel portal

Diagrams are not to scale and all measurements are approximate for illustration purposes only.

Draft EIS alternatives



Comments

Interest in station location because closer to multiple trip generators

Concerns with access to Terminal 91 during construction

Concerns with business displacements

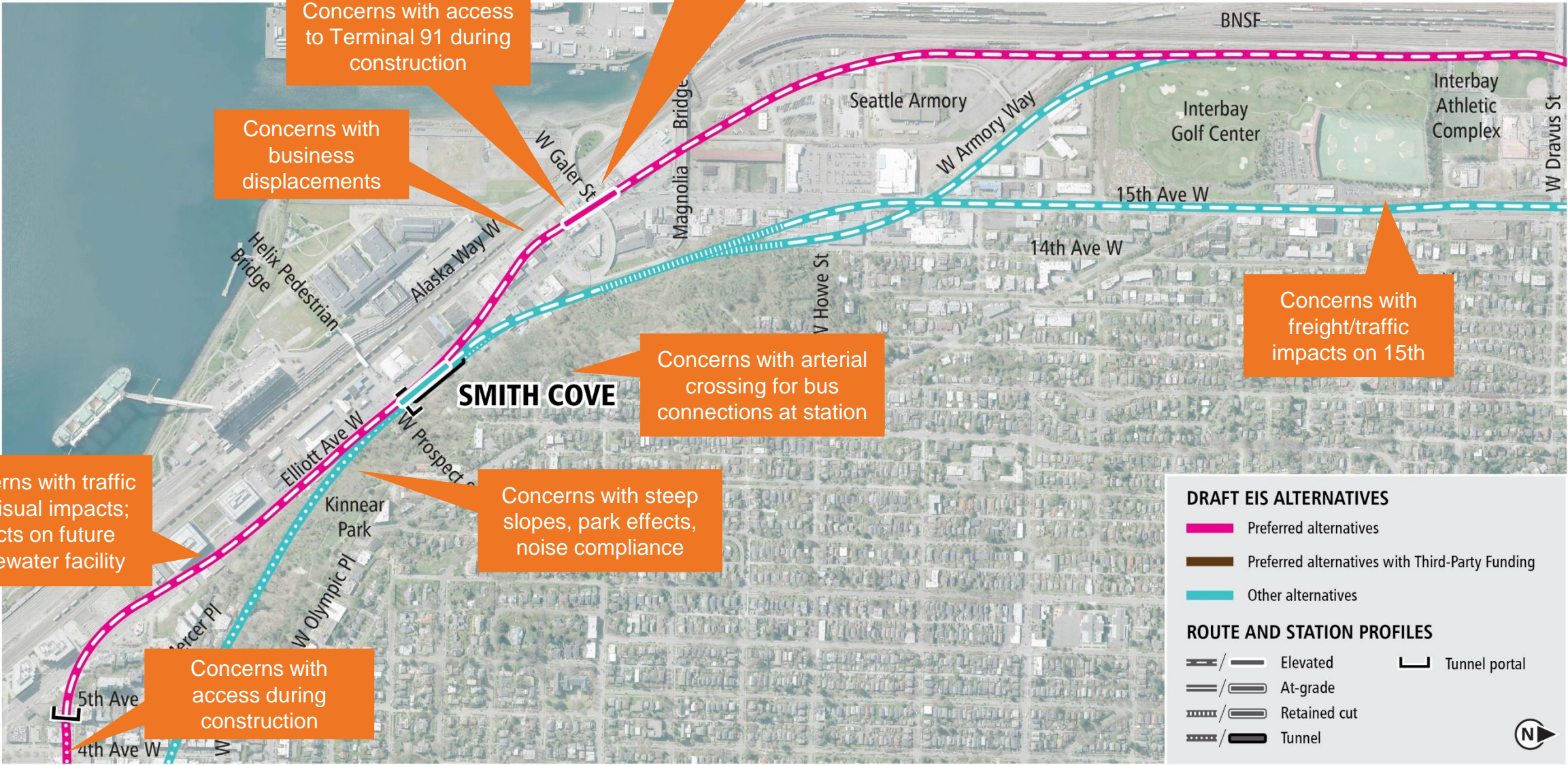
Concerns with freight/traffic impacts on 15th

Concerns with arterial crossing for bus connections at station

Concerns with steep slopes, park effects, noise compliance

Concerns with traffic and visual impacts; effects on future wastewater facility

Concerns with access during construction



DRAFT EIS ALTERNATIVES

- Preferred alternatives
- Preferred alternatives with Third-Party Funding
- Other alternatives

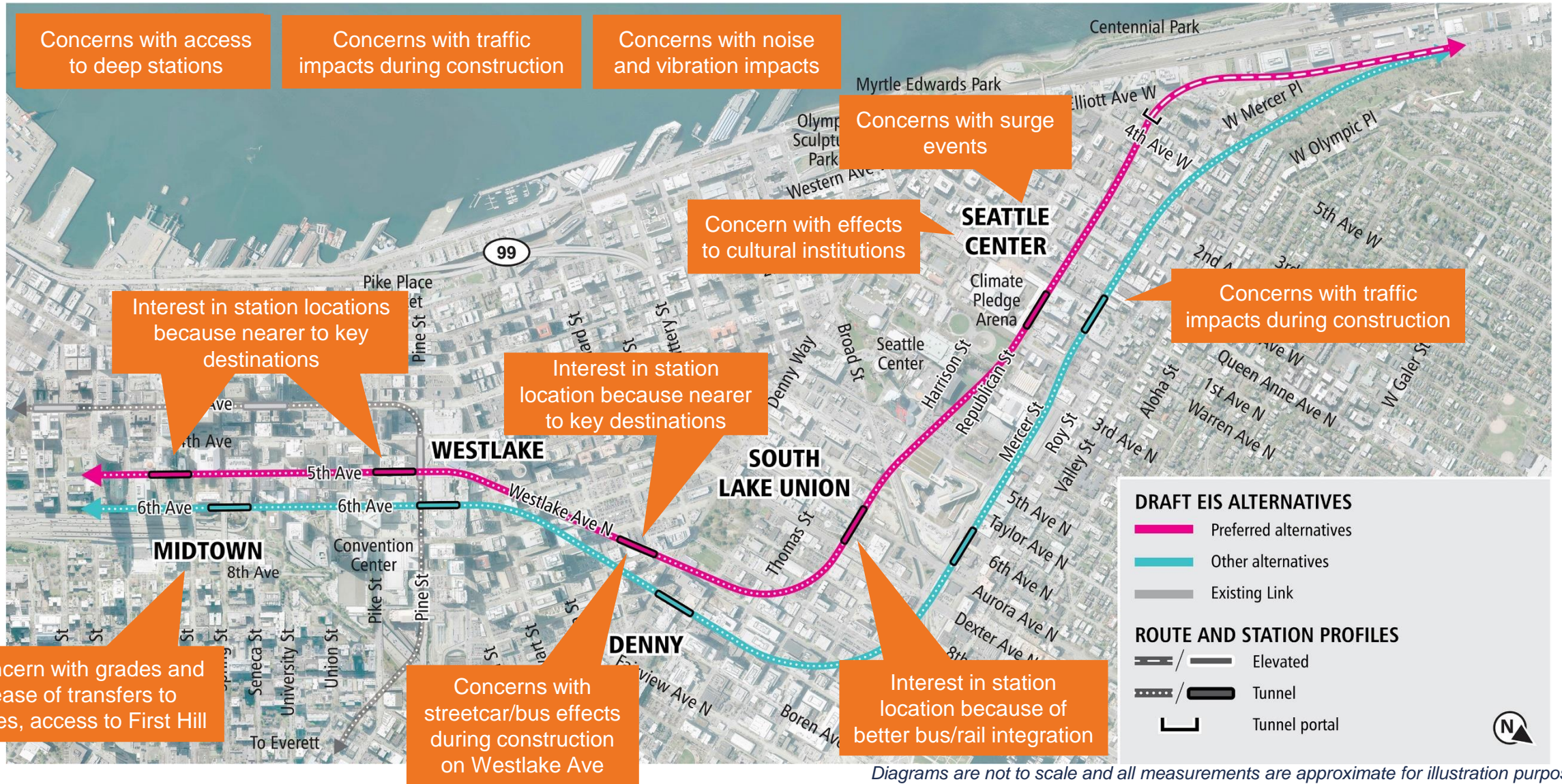
ROUTE AND STATION PROFILES

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Draft EIS alternatives

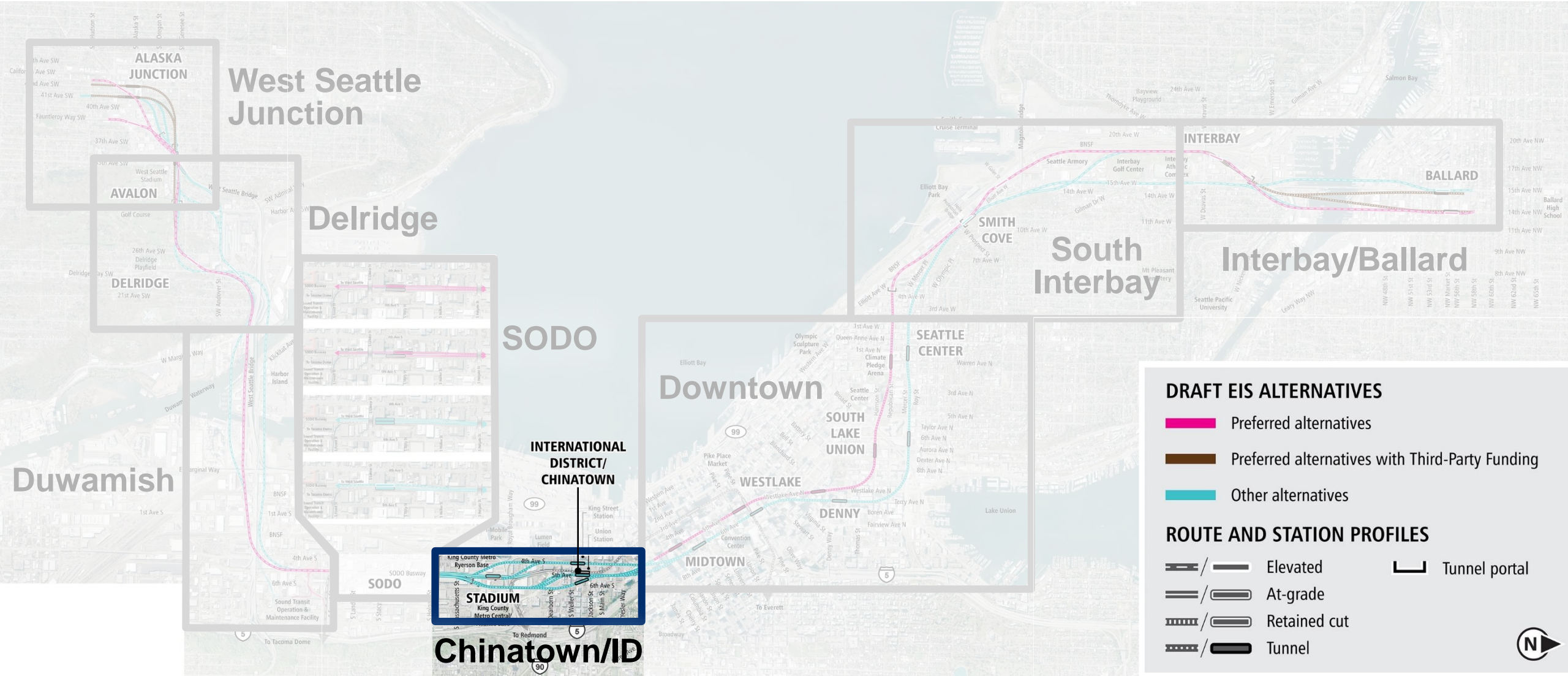


Comments



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Draft EIS alternatives



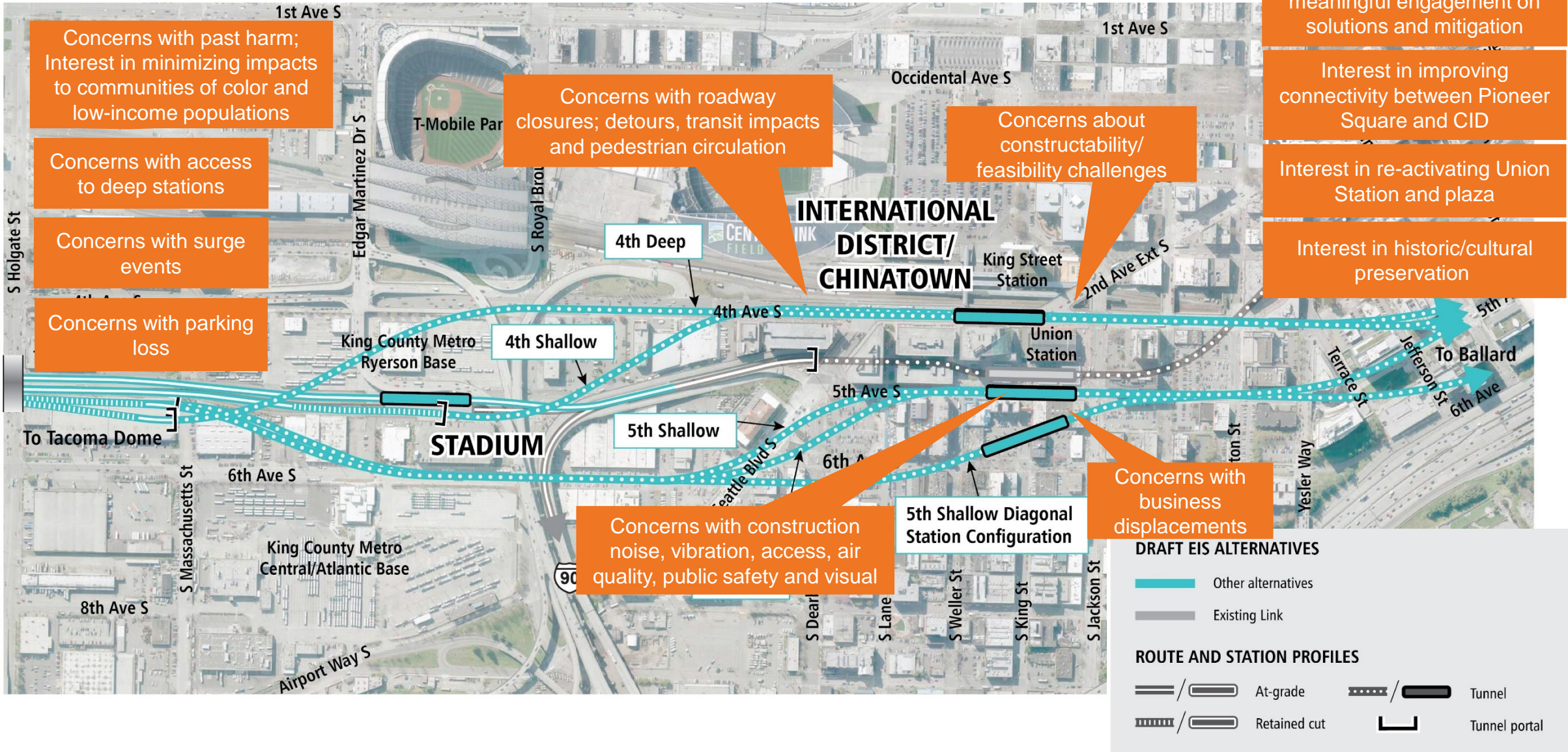
DRAFT EIS ALTERNATIVES

- █ Preferred alternatives
- █ Preferred alternatives with Third-Party Funding
- █ Other alternatives

ROUTE AND STATION PROFILES

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Comments



RET: Centering/Lifting up community input

- Recognize the multitude of **past harms** inflicted on the community from past infrastructure projects and policies that have **ongoing effects** today
- Strong concern over **displacement of businesses in the CID**, which are valued as places of gathering and community wealth-building, and **potential loss of cultural identity** and community ownership of land
- Desire to see **additional near-term engagement between community and agency partners** to collectively address remaining questions, minimize potential impacts and maximize community benefits, whether as part of design, through mitigation approaches, or as part of broader partnerships
- Support for **investment in public spaces** that foster connections between CID and Pioneer Square, promote safety and a sense of belonging, and support for an **improved experience for riders** accessing transit services

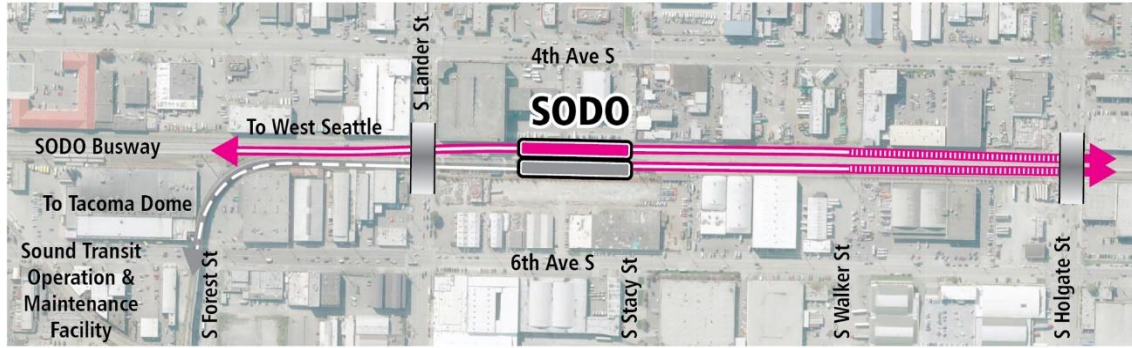
Draft EIS alternatives



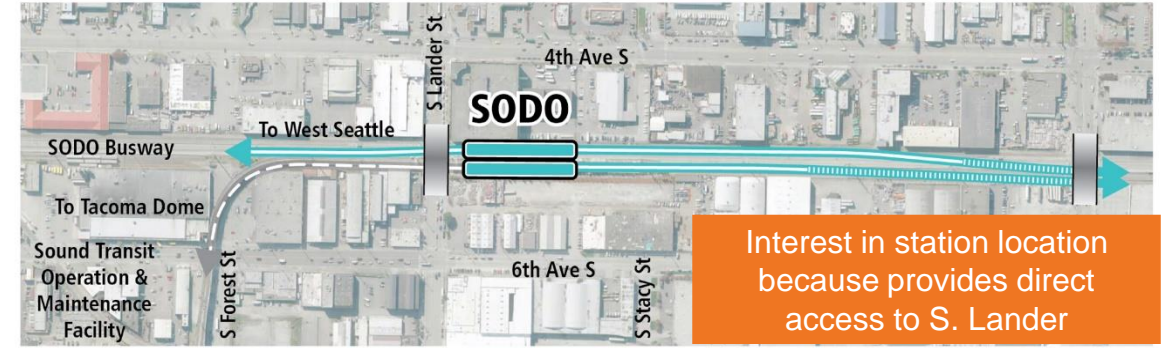
Comments

Concerns with traffic effects during construction including during stadium events

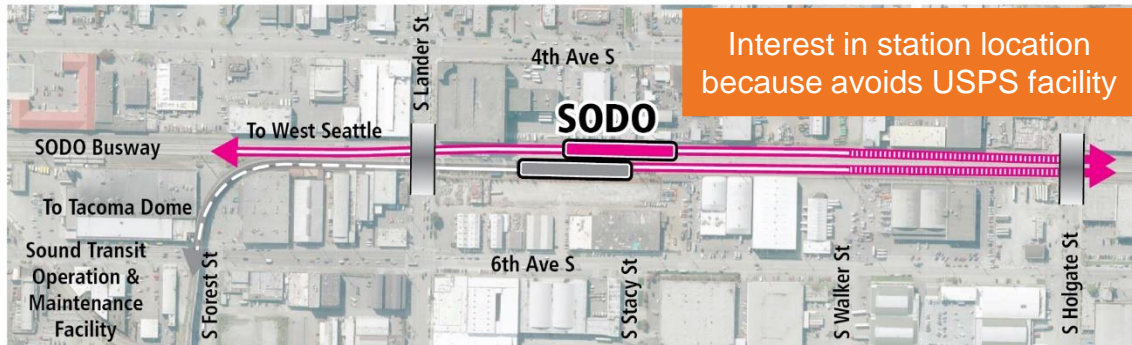
Concerns with freight access and mobility during construction



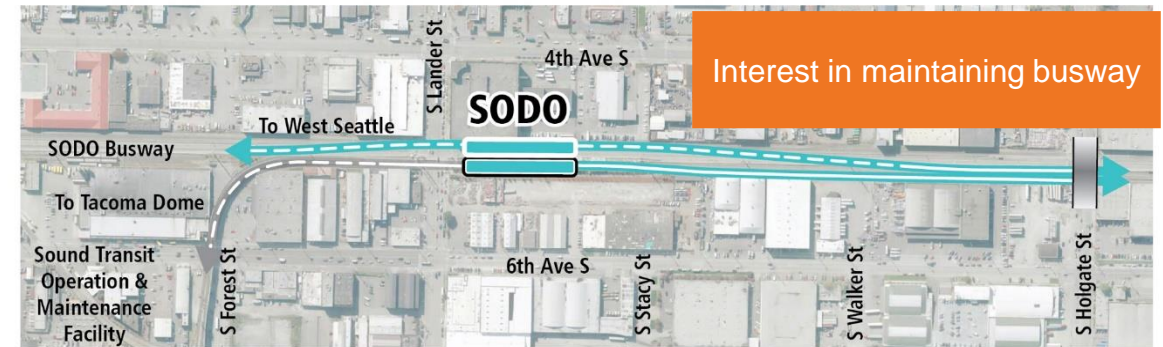
At-Grade Alternative (SODO-1a)



At-Grade South Station Option (SODO-1b)



At-Grade Alternative (SODO-1a) Staggered Station Configuration



Mixed Profile Alternative (SODO-2)

Concerns with effects to SODO Trail during construction

Concerns with property and business impacts

DRAFT EIS ALTERNATIVES

- Preferred alternatives
- Other alternatives
- Existing Link

ROUTE AND STATION PROFILES

- At-grade
- Retained cut
- Elevated
- Street overpass



Draft EIS alternatives



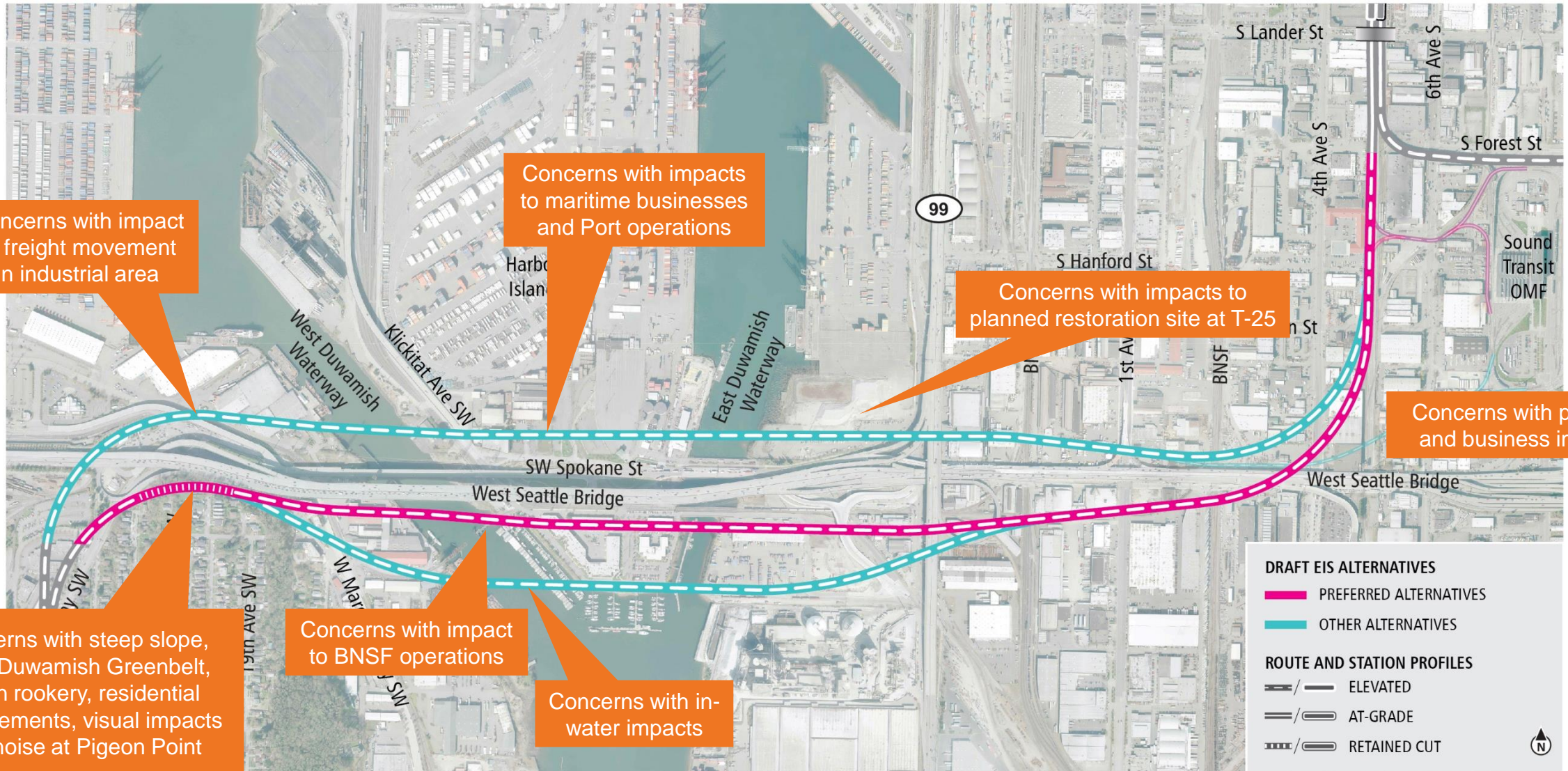
DRAFT EIS ALTERNATIVES

- █ Preferred alternatives
- █ Preferred alternatives with Third-Party Funding
- █ Other alternatives

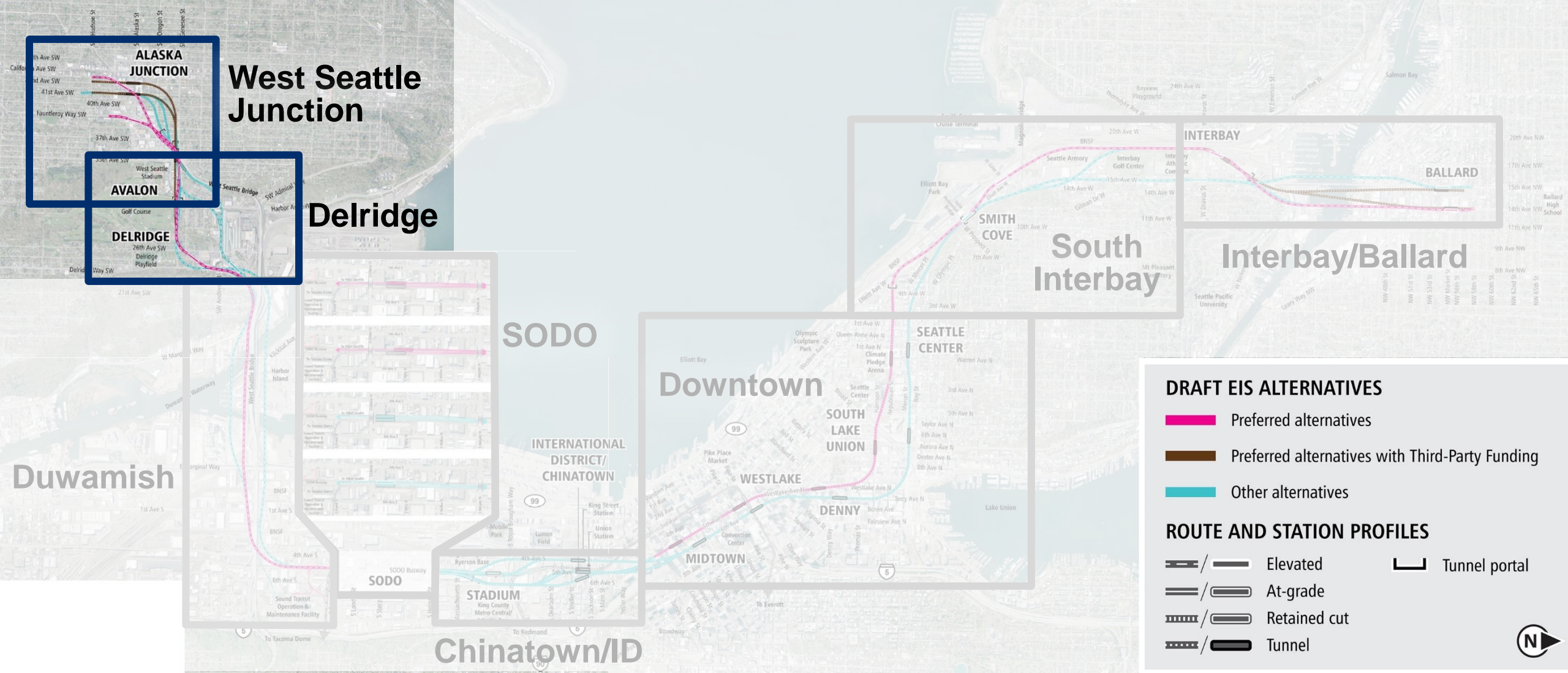
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Comments



Draft EIS alternatives



ALASKA JUNCTION

AVALON

DELDRIDGE

West Seattle Junction

Delridge

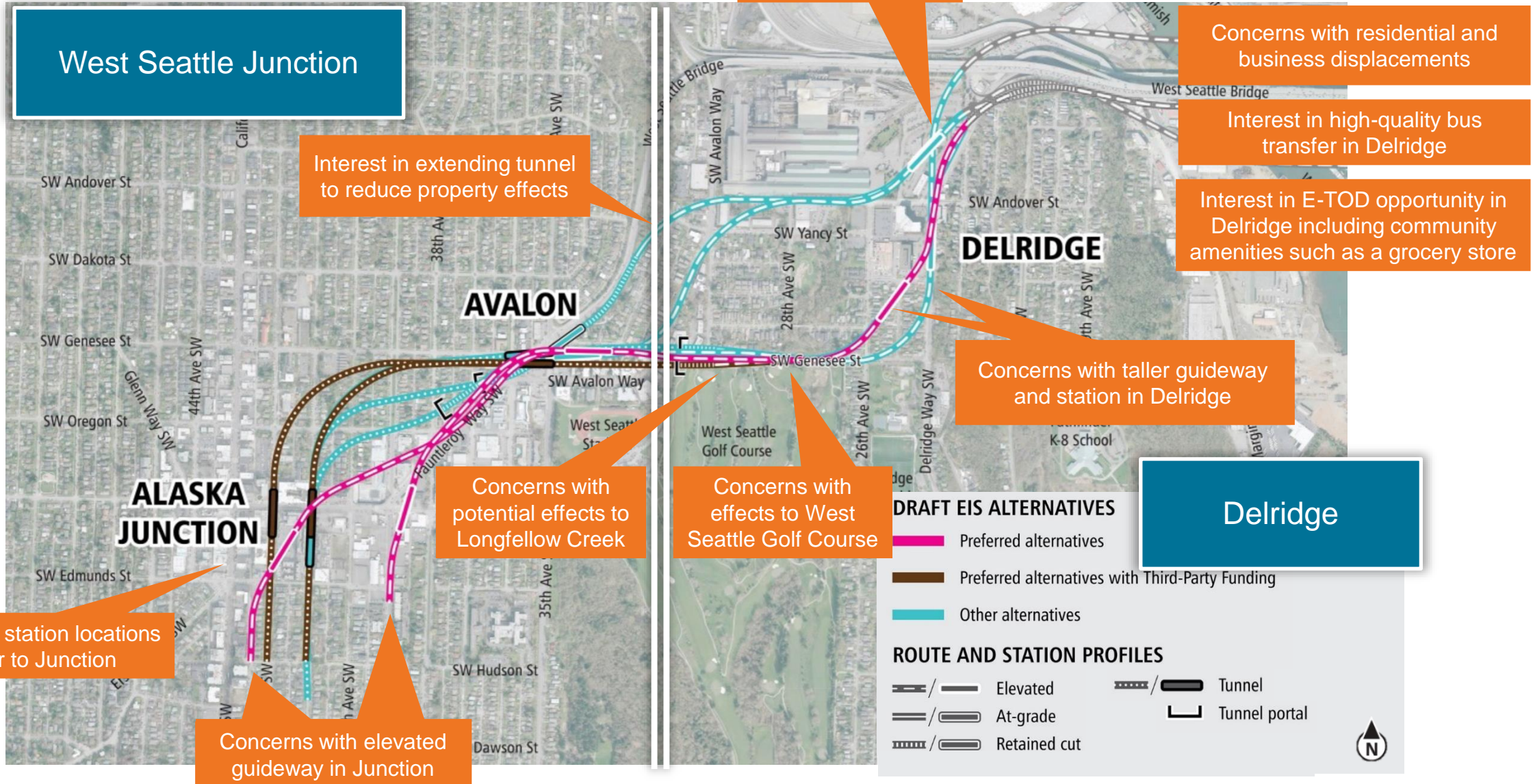
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Comments



RET: Centering/Lifting up community input

- Delridge Station should prioritize an integrated and **well-designed transfer experience from buses to light rail**, better serving communities of color that will connect to the regional system from further south
- Interest in redevelopment occurring in the station area that includes **affordable housing and neighborhood amenities, such as a grocery store**
- Interest in **preserving and where possible improving Longfellow Creek and the West Duwamish Greenbelt**
- Concerns over potential **displacements of organizations serving low-income and communities of color** including, Alki Beach Academy, Transitional Resources, and Indian Child Welfare Office, a part of the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families

Project-wide comments

Interests



Planning and encouraging more biking and walking mode share



Planning for future expansion and incorporating in design



Equitable TOD, particularly community-led/driven eTOD



Shallower tunnel stations



Fast and reliable transit transfers

Project-wide comments

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Shallower tunnel stations



Fast and reliable transit transfers

Concerns



Station accessibility and reliability of vertical conveyances



Roadway closures and ADA access during construction



Traffic impacts related to elevated guideways



Pick-up/drop-off and neighborhood traffic impacts



Pedestrian safety for stations next to major arterials



Gentrification/ economic displacement related to light rail



Transit impacts during construction without good alternative routes

Project-wide comments

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Further Study Requests



More technical analysis of access, integration, TOD reflected in EIS write-up



More clarity on how stations will integrate into industrial lands planning



Integration of art and programming that supports sense of belonging for BIPOC



Reducing size, bulk, and complexity of stations to save costs and limit impacts



Early development of quality non-motorized detour routes during construction

Next steps

Next steps



Comments

Public comments shared with Sound Transit Board.

June 2022



Board action

Sound Transit Board confirms or modifies the preferred alternative.

July 2022



Final EIS

Sound Transit staff prepares the Final EIS, which responds to comments received on the Draft EIS.

Mid 2022 - 2023



Board action

Sound Transit Board selects the project to be built.

Late 2023

 *wsblink.participate.online*

 **SOUNDTRANSIT**

