

Appendix A

NEPA Scoping Public Involvement Summary

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Ballard Link Extension

NEPA Scoping Public Involvement Summary

December 2024

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NEPA Scoping Public Involvement Summary

NEPA SCOPING PERIOD: Oct. 24 – Dec. 9, 2024

PROJECT PHASE: PLANNING

Introduction

In partnership with the Federal Transit Administration, Sound Transit will publish a new National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Supplemental State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Ballard Link Extension. This second environmental review process will build upon the 2022 West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions (WSBLE) Draft EIS with analysis of new alternatives and project refinements identified by the Sound Transit Board in March and July of 2023. Given the additional environmental review needed for these project refinements, staff determined that the WSLE and BLE projects would advance on two different environmental review timelines. Sound Transit has been collecting feedback from Tribes, the public, and agencies to inform the study of the Ballard Link Extension (BLE) alternatives since 2017, with the first scoping phase for the WSBLE Draft EIS being carried out in 2019.

The first stage in this second EIS process is a scoping period, however Sound Transit is not starting over. All comments from the previous environmental review process (scoping, draft EIS, etc.) have been used to inform the current project status and will be carried forward into the new BLE Draft EIS.

Overview

Sound Transit conducted NEPA scoping for the Ballard Link Extension (BLE) project from Oct. 24 through Dec. 9, 2024. This second NEPA scoping phase provided an opportunity for partners and the community to learn about and comment on the project as it stands after six years of analysis, design and public engagement.

This report describes Sound Transit's public involvement efforts during NEPA scoping, which included in-person and online opportunities to review and provide input on the following:

- Current route and station alternatives.
- Topics to study in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- Project Purpose and Need.

Participation by the numbers



166 Scoping comments



9,600+ Online visitors to our online open house



2 Public scoping meetings with **179** attendees



Earned media from **4** publications



6 Email updates engaging **12,200+** subscribers and a blog post engaging **4,300+** subscribers



Ads featured in **5** digital publications



Posts on Facebook with **24** engagements

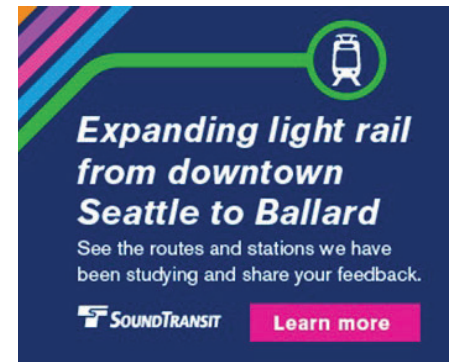


Informational materials translated into **4** languages

Notifications

Sound Transit advertised the NEPA scoping comment period using various notification tools between October and December 2024. Notifications included the following and details are available in the appendix.

- Emails to subscriber lists.
- Social media (Facebook).
- Media advisory.
- Digital ads in local publications.
- Notice in the Federal Register.



Digital ad example

Outreach opportunities: In-person and online

Public meetings:

Sound Transit held two in-person NEPA scoping meetings for two hours each. The meetings included displays with project information, display boards showing current station and route alternatives, and opportunities to submit scoping comments. Paper comment forms and laptops were available for attendees to use and submit their scoping comments. A court reporter was also in attendance to transcribe scoping comments from attendees (court reporters and interpreters worked together to provide in-language transcription of verbal comments).

Scoping meetings were held in ADA-accessible venues that were transit accessible.

Scoping Meeting #1 (99 attendees)

Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024: 5-7 p.m.

Union Station, 401 S Jackson St, Seattle, WA 98104

Interpretation was available in Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, and ASL.

Scoping Meeting #2 (80 attendees)

Wednesday, Nov. 13: 5-7 p.m.

National Nordic Museum, 2655 NW Market St, Seattle, WA 98107

Interpretation was available in ASL.



ASL Interpretation at Union Station scoping meeting

Online open house:

An online open house was available for approximately six weeks between Oct. 24 – Dec. 9, 2024. The online open house provided stakeholders the opportunity to review scoping information and provide scoping comments on current route and station alternatives, topics to study in the Draft EIS, and the project Purpose and Need. All materials from in-person events were available on the online open house. The online open house was fully translated into four languages: Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, and Spanish. Additional language translations were available by request and through an embedded Google Translate tool on the site.

The online open house received over 9,600 visitors during the NEPA scoping period.

Materials:

The following materials were developed or made available for the in-person and online open houses. All materials (except where noted) were translated into four languages: Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, and Spanish.

NEPA scoping information handout: A two-page document providing an overview of the environmental review process thus far, the scoping period, a project timeline, and next steps, and highlighting the ways to submit a scoping comment.

Purpose and Need handout: A one-page handout outlining the project Purpose and Need statement (available in English; translated versions of the Purpose and Need statement were available on the online open house).

Presentation: The presentation included a project overview and timeline, information on the planning phase (2017-2023) and the need for a second NEPA scoping period, a map of the current route and station alternatives, an overview of the environmental review process, and information on ways to provide scoping comments.

Display boards: The display boards shared general information about the project and the upcoming environmental review process, including a project timeline, information about NEPA scoping and why it is happening again, how to comment during the scoping period, and maps of the current station and route alternatives by project segment.

Meeting guide: A handout for each meeting attendee that included the presentation slides and meeting display boards.

Project fact sheet: A general project fact sheet highlighting the project map, timeline, and key milestones.

Comment form: A one-page comment form providing space to write comments and a place sign up for BLE email updates.

Appendix M from the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extension Projects Draft EIS: An appendix from the project's previous Draft EIS with information about prior alternatives development processes, which informed current station and alignment alternatives (available in English upon request).

Further Studies Executive Summary: A summary of the further studies that followed the previous Draft EIS; study results that informed the refinement to current alternatives were highlighted. (available in English upon request).

Comment collection

Sound Transit collected NEPA scoping comments in a variety of ways, both in-person and online:

Online open house: Commenters could provide scoping comments online using the project website, available 24/7 during the scoping period.

Comment cards: Commenters could write their feedback on comment cards available at in-person open houses events held during the scoping period.

Speak with a court reporter: Commenters could share a verbal comment with a court reporter at an open house, which would then be transcribed.

Voicemail: Commenters could call the Ballard Link Extension project phone number to record a verbal comment, which would be transcribed.

Email: Commenters could email their scoping comments to blescoping@soundtransit.org

Mailed letter: Commenters could mail letters with their comments to Sound Transit.

Comments received

Nearly 170 scoping comments were received through various channels including comment forms and comments made at in-person events, the online open house, emails, and voicemails.

Overall Scoping Feedback:

- Support for regional transit and for building the BLE as quickly as possible and fulfilling the voter approved ST3 plan.
- Support for building the project right to effectively serve Seattle for generations.
- Support for tunnel alignments where possible.
- Interest in providing effective multimodal access at stations and prioritizing below ground station transfers.
- Concerns related to property acquisitions and construction effects on homes and businesses.
- Interest in an extended 90-day public comment period when the Draft EIS is released.

CID/SODO Segment Scoping Feedback:

- Interest in locating the CID Station on 4th Avenue S to create a transit hub in South Downtown and prioritizing an efficient passenger transfer experience.
- Some interest in locating the CID Station at S Dearborn Street.
- Some concerns that the CID Station at S Dearborn Street is not accessible to existing infrastructure, and that it could affect or displace the nearby artist community.
- Interest in removing the CID Station alternatives at 5th Avenue from consideration.
- Some interest in continued study of the social and economic impacts of CID Station alternatives on nearby communities.
- Concerns about displacement and neighborhood effects to the CID community and small businesses during construction.

Downtown Segment Scoping Feedback:

- Concerns about construction impacts, particularly road closures and construction of multiple stations concurrently, and noise and vibration.
- Some interest in preserving the building housing the Washington State Department of Corrections reentry center and not displacing the program.
- Some support for the Midtown Station location on 5th Ave.

South Interbay and Interbay/Ballard Segments Scoping Feedback:

- Some interest in the preferred Smith Cove station location for its proximity to the cruise ship

terminals.

- Some interest in a tunnel alignment along Elliott Avenue.
- Some concern about business displacements in Interbay.
- Interest in a tunnel under Salmon Bay instead of a bridge.
- Support for a Ballard station located at 15th Avenue NW.
- Some interest in a station farther west or exploring pedestrian tunnels to better connect the Ballard station to the Ballard core.



Community members providing scoping comments at the NEPA Scoping Meeting at Union Station

Next steps

Additional opportunities for public involvement related to the project design will occur throughout the project planning phase and following the release of the Draft EIS, expected in 2025. There are multiple ways for the public to stay informed about the project:

Email the project: ballardlink@soundtransit.org.

Call the Community Outreach Team: 206-903-7223.

Visit the project website: soundtransit.org/ballardlink-design.

Sign up for project updates by email: soundtransit.org/subscribe.

Appendix A: Notifications

Sound Transit advertised the scoping comment period between October and December 2024:

Social media

Sound Transit notified the community about in-person and online opportunities to participate in the scoping comment period through Facebook. An organic post was made to announce the start of the scoping period and share information on how to submit a comment. Following this announcement, two events were created for the Nov. 7 and Nov. 13 scoping meetings and advertised organically on the Sound Transit page.

Sound Transit Facebook event Post

The screenshot shows a Facebook event post. At the top, a notification states: "Post permissions for this event have been turned off for guests. The posts you see were made by the host or were posted before the permissions changed." Below this, the "RECENT ACTIVITY" section shows "Sound Transit" creating an event on November 8. The event details include: "15 people responded", "Event by Sound Transit", "National Nordic Museum", and "Public · Anyone on or off Facebook". The event description reads: "We've been collecting your feedback to identify potential alignments and inform our study of BLE alternatives since 2017. As part of our environmental review process, we have a ran... See more". The event title is "Ballard Link Extension Scoping Meeting #2" at the "National Nordic Museum" on "Wed, Nov 13", with "12 people interested". A photo shows two people looking at a map display. At the bottom, there are links for "Privacy", "Consumer Health Privacy", "Terms", "Advertising", "Ad Choices", "Cookies", "More", and "Meta © 2024".

Digital ads

The project team ran digital ads to five local publications (including two in-language Chinese publications) to advertise the scoping meetings. Ads linked to the project online open house with more information on how to make a public comment.

Publication	Run Dates	Impressions
International Examiner	10/24 - 11/7	33,130
NW Asian Weekly	10/24 - 11/7	17,948
Seattle Chinese Post	10/24 - 11/7	8,730
Seattle Chinese Times	10/24 - 11/7	6,400
The Seattle Times	10/24 - 11/7	73,370

Digital ad example

Diwali officially added to Pennsylvania's state holiday calendar

Diwali is now officially a state holiday in Pennsylvania, following Governor Josh Shapiro's signing of Senate Bill 402 on Monday.

More Editorials

NAMES IN THE NEWS

Raman Arora
Kent

Raman Arora: From immigrant dream to Entrepreneur of the Year

US President & Vice President

Bob Ferguson
Governor

Denny Heck
Lt. Governor

Sharon Tashiro Santos
Lt. Gov. State Representative Pct. 1

Min Su-Ling Gregerson
Lt. Gov. State Representative Pct. 2

Bob Hasegawa
Lt. Gov. State Representative

FULL LIST AT
WWW.FAPAGOW.ORG

Expanding light rail from downtown Seattle to Ballard

See the routes and stations we have been studying and share your feedback.

SOUNDTRANSIT [Learn more](#)

For everything you'd rather do than have the flu

[Get Vaccinated >](#)

In-language digital ad example

時西 SEATTLE CHINESE TIMES

請不要錯過你喜歡的事情：接種疫苗！
更新款新冠疫苗 | 流感 | RSV!
Kingcounty.gov/findaclinic

Public Health
Seattle & King County

Local 本地

社區新聞
分析2024年美國選舉之政治動向與選民心態變化
Staff - October 16, 2024

焦點
用納稅人的錢去分發吸毒工具，而非康復支持？
Staff - October 15, 2024

國際新聞
IRS：俄州聯邦稅金寬減，明年擴大Direct F...
Staff - October 15, 2024

社區新聞
反壟斷是改善有毒的環境的重要手段
Staff - October 14, 2024

SR 509
正在施工中！
了解預期事項，請參加
在线开放日
截止日期为2024年10月28日
WSDOT

將輕軌從西雅圖市中心擴展至Ballard
查看我們一直在研究的路線和車站，並分享您的意見回饋。
SOUNDTRANSIT [了解更多](#)

Focus 焦點

西雅圖在地釀製康普茶品牌
美國超級市場飲料選擇之多，遠不少華人朋友難以應付。如果你還沒有習慣喝康普茶，紅酒、白酒的界，也不那麼容易找到有創意的汽水飲料。超市中康普茶區還有一片康普茶（kombucha）——又稱紅茶醋——

社區新聞
華州就首批疑似人類感染禽流感病例進行調查
Staff - October 23, 2024

焦點
華州商務部發布五年無家可歸應對計劃
Staff - October 22, 2024

焦點
華州資本利得稅爭議 教育經費與稅改
Staff - October 21, 2024

Community 社區通知

SPL
是您的圖書館
是您的圖書館
WWW.SPL.ORG/YourLibrary

World 世界

在華盛頓 | Staff - October 14, 2024
人類預期壽命增長放緩 科技難以突
破衰老障礙

在華盛頓 | Staff - September 25, 2024
特朗普承諾 振興國內汽車製造業

在華盛頓 | Staff - September 17, 2024
混合動力與全電動車的競爭優勢

在華盛頓 | Staff - September 4, 2024
AI防止飯碗掃描工作更有效率

在華盛頓 | Staff - August 6, 2024
經濟低迷期 連鎖店店舖5美元
將吸引顧客

家人無流感 工作無流感 健身無流感 球賽日無流感
學校無流感 餐館無流感 朋友無流感 生活無流感

Media Advisory

Sound Transit posted a media advisory on the Ballard Link Extension project page on ST.org.



Project updates

Learn about where and when construction is happening throughout the ST district.

[Home](#) / [Get to know us](#) / [News and events](#) / [Project updates](#) / [Public comment period begins on Ballard Link Extension](#)

Ballard Link Extension

Public comment period begins on Ballard Link Extension

Opportunity for public to provide feedback on the project; comment period ends Dec. 9

October 28, 2024

Sound Transit has started the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) scoping process for the [Ballard Link Extension](#). The extension will add 7.7 miles of light rail service with nine new stations from downtown Seattle to the Ballard neighborhood, including a new downtown Seattle rail-only tunnel.

Sound Transit previously conducted a scoping process and comment period in 2019 to inform the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that was published in 2022. Since then, the West Seattle and Ballard Link projects have separated, and Sound Transit is now developing a new NEPA Draft EIS and Supplemental State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Draft EIS for the Ballard Link Extension.

The new Ballard Link Extension Draft EIS will carry forward the range of alternatives and all public feedback collected from the project's earlier combined WSBE Scoping and Draft EIS comment periods.

Community members can learn more about the project and provide additional new feedback through the [Ballard Link Extension participate online site](#) and at two public scoping meetings:

- **Thursday, Nov. 7, 5 – 7 p.m.; short presentation at 5:30 p.m.**
 - Union Station, Joni Earl Great Hall
 - 401 S Jackson Street, Seattle, WA 98104
 - Cantonese, Mandarin, and Vietnamese interpretation and translated materials will be available. ASL interpretation will be provided.
 - Refreshments and activities for children will be provided.
- **Wednesday, Nov. 13, 5 – 7 p.m., short presentation at 5:30 p.m.**
 - National Nordic Museum
 - 2655 NW Market Street, Seattle, WA 98107
 - ASL interpretation will be provided.
 - Refreshments and activities for children will be provided.

Feedback can also be emailed to ballardlink@soundtransit.org or called in at 206-903-7223.

Written comments can be mailed to:

- Ballard Link Extension, c/o Lauren Swift
Sound Transit
401 S. Jackson St., Seattle, WA 98104.

Comments are due December 9.

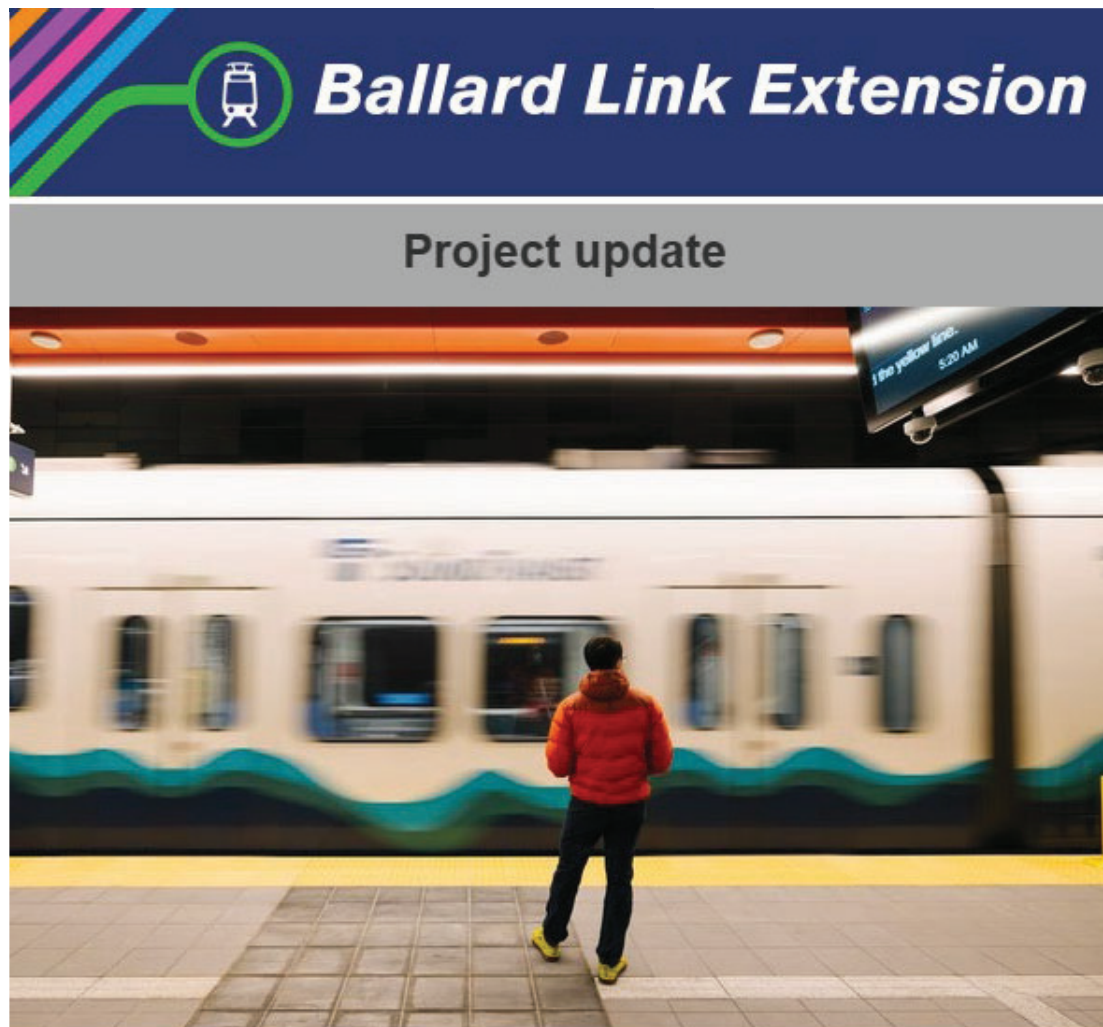
Following the NEPA scoping process, Sound Transit will prepare the Ballard Link Extension Draft EIS in coordination with the Federal Transit Administration. Publication of the Draft EIS is expected in 2025. Start of service for the Ballard Link Extension is scheduled for 2039.

More information is available about the Ballard Link Extension can be accessed [here](#).

Email subscriber list

Sound Transit sent four emails to the project email subscriber list (over 12,200 subscribers) in preparation for the scoping period. The initial email announced the scoping period and in-person events and opportunities to provide comments. Subsequent emails provided updates to the scoping timeline and in-person meeting information.

One of the the four emails sent to email subscribers



BLE scoping begins today!

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) scoping comment period for the Ballard Link Extension (BLE) begins today! This extended comment period will last 45 days, ending on Dec. 9. We are collecting your feedback on the project's Purpose and Need, route and station alternatives, and potential topics for study in the BLE Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We have collected public input on the project since planning began in 2017, and all your past comments will carry forward in the ongoing environmental review process. We invite you to share new and additional feedback with us.

Learn more at upcoming scoping meetings:

Drop by these open house scoping meetings at any time. Project staff will attend to answer questions and court reporters will be present to capture scoping comments. The scoping meeting content will cover information about the EIS process, project history, and current route and station alternatives.

Scoping Meeting #1

- Nov. 7, 5-7 p.m., short presentation at 5:30 p.m.
 - Union Station, [401 S Jackson Street, Seattle, WA 98104](#)
 - *Cantonese, Mandarin, and Vietnamese interpretation and translated materials will be available. ASL interpretation will be provided.*
 - *Refreshments and activities for children will be provided.*

Scoping Meeting #2

- Nov. 13, 5-7 p.m., short presentation at 5:30 p.m.
 - National Nordic Museum, [2655 NW Market Street, Seattle, WA 98107](#)
 - *ASL interpretation will be provided.*
 - *Refreshments and activities for children will be provided.*

To request accommodation, contact project staff in advance of a scoping meeting at ballardlink@soundtransit.org.

How to provide public comment:

- **Attend one of our scoping meetings:** We will have court reporters and computers available for submission of in-person and online comments.
- **Comment online:** soundtransit.org/ballardlink-design
- **Email us:** blescoping@soundtransit.org
- **Leave a voicemail:** 206-903-7223
- **Mail us:** Ballard Link Extension, c/o Lauren Swift, Sound Transit, 401 S. Jackson St., Seattle, WA 98104

Review and comment now

Stay up to date

- 2024年10月24日，Sound Transit開始進行Ballard Link擴展項目 (Ballard Link Extension, BLE) 的《國家環境政策法》(NEPA) 選址程序。我們正在徵求對於BLE《環境影響報告草案》(Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Draft EIS) 中的目的與需求、備選方案及潛在影響的意見回饋。45天的選址意見徵詢期將於12月9日結束。隨時掌握[Ballard Link擴展](#)項目的最新資訊。
- 2024年10月24日，Sound Transit开始了Ballard Link扩展项目 (BLE) 的《国家环境政策法》(NEPA) 范围界定流程。我们正在寻求有关Ballard Link扩展项目 (Ballard Link Extension, BLE) 《环境影响报告书 (EIS) 草案》中所研究的目的和需求、备选方案以及潜在影响的反馈。为期45天的范围界定评议期将于12月9日结束。获取有关[Ballard Link扩展](#)项目的最新消息。
- Vào ngày 24 tháng 10 năm 2024, Sound Transit đã bắt đầu quy trình xác định phạm vi theo Đạo Luật Chính Sách Môi Trường Quốc Gia (National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA) cho dự án Mở Rộng Tuyến Ballard Link (Ballard Link Extension, BLE). Chúng tôi đang thu thập ý kiến phản hồi về Mục Đích và Nhu Cầu, các lựa chọn thay thế và các tác động tiềm ẩn để đưa vào nghiên cứu trong Bản Thảo Báo Cáo Tác Động Môi Trường (EIS) cho dự án BLE. Giai đoạn đóng góp ý kiến về xác định phạm vi sẽ kéo dài 45 ngày và kết thúc vào ngày 9 tháng 12. Luôn cập nhật thông tin về dự án [Mở Rộng Tuyến Ballard Link](#).
- El 24 de octubre de 2024, Sound Transit inició el proceso de definición del alcance de la Ley de Política Ambiental Nacional (National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA) para la extensión de Link a Ballard (Ballard Link Extension, BLE). Queremos recibir comentarios sobre el propósito y la necesidad, las alternativas y los posibles impactos que se estudiarán en el borrador de la Declaración de Impacto Ambiental (Draft Environmental Impact Statement, EIS) de la BLE. El 9 de diciembre finaliza el plazo de 45 días para enviar comentarios. Manténgase al tanto del proyecto de [Extensión de Ballard Link](#).
- On Oct. 24, 2024, Sound Transit began the National Environmental Policy Act scoping process for the Ballard Link Extension (BLE). We are seeking feedback on the Purpose and Need, alternatives, and potential topics to be studied in the BLE Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The 45-day scoping comment period ends on Dec. 9. Stay current with [the Ballard Link Extension](#) project.

More project info: soundtransit.org/ballardlink

Get in touch: ballardlink@soundtransit.org or 206-903-7229

Notice in Federal Register

The Federal Register is the official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, and notices of Federal agencies and organizations. Sound Transit alongside the Federal Transit Administration issued a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Federal Register on Oct. 24, 2024. This notice contained project information like the Purpose and Need and description of proposed alternatives, background on the previously associated WSBLE environmental review process, notice of the 45-day NEPA scoping comment period, and contact information for the Sound Transit Environmental Team.



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Ballard Link Extension Project, King County, Washington

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS).

SUMMARY: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as lead Federal agency, and the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (Sound Transit), as local project sponsor and joint lead agency, issue this notice to advise the public that they intend to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the Ballard Link Extension Project (Project) located in the City of Seattle, King County, Washington.

DATES: Comments related to the NEPA review of this project must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL

REGISTER]. FTA will consider comments received after that date to the extent practicable.

FTA will consider all comments received during this NEPA scoping period and those previously submitted during the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) scoping process.

Commenters who previously provided SEPA scoping comments do not need to resubmit those same comments for consideration under NEPA, but may elect to do so.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the scope of the EIS should be directed to: Lauren Swift, Central Corridor Environmental Manager, 401 South Jackson Street, Seattle, WA, 98104, by email to: lauren.swift@soundtransit.org, or by phone at 206-398-5301.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For FTA: Erin Littauer, erin.littauer@dot.gov, 206-220-7521. For Sound Transit: Lauren Swift, lauren.swift@soundtransit.org, 206-398-5301.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Project would extend existing light rail service along a 7.7-mile corridor through downtown Seattle, from SODO to Ballard, and include a new 3.3-mile light rail-only tunnel from south of the Chinatown-International District to South Lake Union and Seattle Center/Uptown. Stations would serve the following areas: Chinatown-International District, Midtown, Westlake, Denny, South Lake Union, Seattle Center, Smith Cove, Interbay, and Ballard. FTA has created the following “Unique Identification Number” that will be included on all environmental documents for this project: EISX-021-36-R10-1728553542.

FTA, as NEPA Federal lead agency, and Sound Transit, as joint lead agency for NEPA and lead agency under the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), issued a Notice of Intent / Scoping Notice in February 2019 and later published a combined NEPA/SEPA Draft EIS in January 2022 that evaluated both the West Seattle Link Extension and the Ballard Link Extension together as a single project: the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions Project (WSBLE). The extensions were evaluated together in the WSBLE Draft EIS because of their location, schedule, and review efficiencies for partner agencies.

In July 2022, the Sound Transit Board directed Sound Transit staff to prepare further studies evaluating additional station options and other refinements for the Ballard Link Extension (BLE). Some of these project options and refinements required additional conceptual engineering and environmental review. Rather than delay completion of the environmental review process for the West Seattle Link Extension while additional review was conducted for BLE, Sound Transit and FTA decided to move forward under separate environmental reviews for each extension. As described in the WSBLE Draft EIS, the two extensions will operate as separate lines, and the extensions are stand-alone projects with independent utility.

Because the environmental review processes are now separated for the two extensions, Sound Transit is preparing a SEPA Supplemental Draft EIS that evaluates the new station options and refinements for the BLE. FTA has determined that a new NEPA Draft EIS be prepared for the BLE, because it is now being evaluated independently from the West Seattle extension. The NEPA process requires that project scoping be repeated with a 30-day public comment period. Scoping for BLE has been extended with a 45-day public comment period. The scoping process and Draft EIS for the BLE will build on the analysis completed for the WSBLE Draft EIS.

Comments made during the previous scoping process (February 19 through April 2, 2019) will be carried forward and considered, as will all of the relevant analysis of alternatives and environmental impacts included in the 2022 Draft EIS. At the conclusion of the NEPA scoping process, FTA and Sound Transit anticipate issuing the Draft NEPA EIS and SEPA Supplemental Draft EIS, including the new information and analysis.

FTA has determined that the project will not be evaluated as a major project as defined in 23 U.S.C. 139(a)(7).

I. Purpose and Need for the Project

The purpose of the project is to expand the Sound Transit Link light rail system from SODO to Ballard, to make appropriate community investments to improve mobility, and to increase capacity and connectivity for regional connections in order to achieve the following:

- Provide rapid, reliable, and efficient light rail transit service to communities in the project corridor as defined through the local planning process and reflected in the regional transit system plan, Sound Transit 3 Plan (<https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/documents-reports/sound-transit-3>).
- Improve regional mobility by increasing connectivity and capacity through Downtown Seattle to meet the projected transit demand.

- Connect regional centers as described in adopted regional and local land use, transportation, and economic development plans and Sound Transit’s *Regional Transit Long-Range Plan* (https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/2015123_lrpupdate.pdf).
- Implement a system that is technically and financially feasible to build, operate, and maintain.
- Expand mobility for the corridor and the region’s residents, which include transit-dependent residents, low-income people, and communities of color.
- Encourage equitable and sustainable urban growth in station areas through support of transit-oriented development and multi-modal integration in a manner that is consistent with local land use plans and policies, including Sound Transit’s Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Policy (<https://www.soundtransit.org/system-expansion/creating-vibrant-stations/transit-oriented-development>) and Sustainability Plan (<https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/documents-reports/2019-sustainability-plan>).
- Encourage convenient and safe non-motorized access to stations, such as bicycle and pedestrian connections, consistent with Sound Transit’s *System Access Policy* (<https://www.soundtransit.org/system-expansion/creating-vibrant-stations/connecting-to-stations>).
- Preserve and promote a healthy environment and economy by minimizing adverse impacts on the natural, built, and social environments through sustainable practices.

The need for the project is as follows:

- When measured using national standards, existing transit routes between SODO and Ballard currently operate with poor reliability. Roadway congestion in the project corridor will continue to degrade transit performance and reliability as the city is expected to add approximately 287,000 people and approximately 214,000 jobs between 2018 and 2050 (Puget Sound Regional Council 2023).

- Increased ridership from regional population and employment growth will increase operational frequency in the existing Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, requiring additional tunnel capacity.
- Puget Sound Regional Council (the regional metropolitan planning organization) and local plans call for high-capacity transit in the corridor consistent with VISION 2050 (<https://www.psrc.org/planning-2050/vision-2050>) and the Regional Transit Long-Range Plan (https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/2015123_lrpupdate.pdf).
- The region's residents and communities, including transit-dependent people, low-income people, and communities of color, need long-term regional mobility and multi-modal connectivity as called for in the Washington State Growth Management Act (Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.108).
- Regional and local plans call for increased residential and/or employment density at and around high-capacity transit stations, and increased options for multi-modal access. VISION 2050 has a goal for 65 percent of the region's population and 75 percent of the region's employment to occur in regional growth centers and within walking distance of transit.
- Environmental and sustainability goals of the State and region, as established in Washington State law and embodied in Puget Sound Regional Council's VISION 2050 (2020) and 2022-2050 Regional Transportation Plan (2022), include reducing greenhouse gas emissions by prioritizing transportation investments that decrease vehicle miles traveled.

II. Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

Each light rail extension build alternative is approximately 7.7 miles long and includes up to nine stations that serve the following areas: Chinatown-International District, Midtown, Westlake, Denny, South Lake Union, Seattle Center, Smith Cove, Interbay, and Ballard. FTA and Sound Transit may also examine several design options and potential minimal operable segments for the proposed alternatives. Information about the proposed project, the alternatives development process, scoping, and the EIS process are available on the project website:

<https://www.soundtransit.org/system-expansion/ballard-link-extension>, by contacting the project sponsor at ballardlink@soundtransit.org, or the project phone line at (206) 903-7223. For purposes of this notice, the proposed build alternatives can be generally described as follows:

A new downtown tunnel would begin in the vicinity of the Stadium station in SODO, head north with alignments between 4th Avenue S and 6th Avenue S through the Chinatown-International District, then travel northwest below 4th Avenue, 5th Avenue or 6th Avenue through Midtown and Westlake. The alternatives would continue in a tunnel configuration along Westlake Avenue N to South Lake Union with a station near Denny Way before turning northwest with a station near Aurora Avenue N between Harrison and Roy streets. The alternatives would continue in a tunnel towards Seattle Center with a station on either Republican or Mercer Streets. The alternatives then turn north and begin to transition to elevated or retained cut configurations to serve a Smith Cove station along Elliott Avenue W. From the Smith Cove station, the alternatives either continue in an elevated configuration along 15th Avenue W or transition to a retained cut along the east side of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railway tracks to an elevated or retained cut station in Interbay near W Dravus Street. From the Interbay station, alternatives transition to the east of 15th Avenue W and cross Salmon Bay in a tunnel or on a high-level fixed bridge. One alternative would continue in an elevated alignment along 15th Avenue W and cross Salmon Bay on the west side of 15th Avenue W on a movable bridge. Station options in Ballard include elevated and tunnel stations near NW Market Street on 15th Avenue NW or 14th Avenue NW.

The build alternatives could also include transit-related roadway, bicycle, maritime, and pedestrian projects by Sound Transit or others. These improvements may be eligible for Federal funding and could be part of the transit project or constructed together with it as part of a joint effort with agency partners, thereby meriting joint environmental analysis. This could include access improvements around station areas and over waterway crossings. Sound Transit would

identify these improvements and could include them as part of the project as it works with partner agencies.

III. Summary of Expected Impacts

Consistent with NEPA, FTA and Sound Transit will evaluate, with input from the public, Tribes, and agencies, the potential impacts of the alternatives on the natural, built, and social environments. Likely areas of investigation include, transportation (including navigable waterways), land use and consistency with applicable plans, land acquisition and displacements, socioeconomics, park and recreation resources, historic and cultural resources, environmental justice, visual and aesthetic qualities, air quality, noise and vibration, energy use, safety and security, and ecosystems, including threatened and endangered species and marine mammals. The EIS will evaluate short-term construction impacts and long-term operational impacts. It will also consider indirect and cumulative impacts. The EIS will also propose measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate significant adverse impacts.

FTA and Sound Transit will comply with all Federal environmental laws, regulations, and executive orders applicable to the proposed project during the environmental review process.

IV. Anticipated Federal Permits and Other Authorizations

Federal Transit Administration:

NEPA Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision

National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Review

United States Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f)

Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, Section 6(f) (if needed)

Federal Emergency Management Agency:

Conditional Letter of Map Revision (if needed)

Letter of Map Revision (if needed)

United States Army Corps of Engineers:

Clean Water Act, Section 404 (if needed) (including WA Department of Ecology Water Quality Certification: Clean Water Act Section 401)

Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 10 (if needed)

United States Code Title 33 Section 408 Review (if needed)

United States Coast Guard:

United States Coast Guard Bridge Permit (if needed)

United States Fish and Wildlife Service:
Federal Endangered Species Review

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service:
Federal Endangered Species Review
Essential Fish Habitat Review
Marine Mammal Take Incidental Harassment Authorization (if needed)

United States Department of the Interior:
National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Review
United States Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f)

V. Schedule for the Decision-Making Process

Below is a tentative schedule for the decision-making process, including environmental review milestones:

Draft EIS publication: April 2025
Confirmation or modification of the Preferred Alternative: July 2025
Final EIS publication: May 2026
Record of Decision: October 2026

As noted in the tentative schedule, the Agencies intend to complete the EIS for the Project within two years, measured from the date of the publication of this notice to the date the record of decision (ROD) is signed. The Agencies will accept public comments on the scope of the EIS (*i.e.*, the information presented in this notice and at <https://www.soundtransit.org/system-expansion/ballard-link-extension>) until [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]. The Agencies will then consider those comments as they prepare the Draft EIS. The Agencies will announce the availability of the Draft EIS in the *Federal Register* and via local media outlets. Sound Transit expects the Draft EIS will be available for a minimum of 45 days for the public comment period in Spring 2025. The Draft EIS will be distributed and available for public and agency review and comment prior to a public hearing. The Agencies will consider substantive comments timely submitted during the public comment period and comments previously submitted for WSBLE and then anticipate preparing a Final EIS in Spring 2026 and ROD in Fall 2026. The Final EIS will identify a

preferred alternative and any necessary mitigation commitments. The Agencies expect that all Federal environmental authorization decisions for the construction of the Project will be completed within a reasonable period following issuance of the ROD.

Notices of public meetings, including hearings, have been, and will continue to be, given through a variety of media providing the time and place of the meeting along with other relevant information. Meeting date, time, and location information can be found on the Project website at <https://www.soundtransit.org/system-expansion/ballard-link-extension>.

Public meeting locations will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. People requesting special accommodations should contact Sound Transit via email at ballardlink@soundtransit.org.

Susan K. Fletcher,

Regional Administrator,

FTA Region 10.

[FR Doc. 2024-24585 Filed: 10/23/2024 8:45 am; Publication Date: 10/24/2024]

Appendix B: Materials

Scoping information handout (2 pages)

Purpose and Need (2 pages)

Presentation (13 pages)

Display boards (13 pages)

Open house meeting guides – See Presentation and Display Boards

Project fact sheet (2 pages)

Scoping comment form (2 pages)

Scoping information handout



Ballard Link Extension

NEPA Scoping Information

Sound Transit has been collecting feedback to identify potential alignments and inform our study of Ballard Link Extension (BLE) alternatives since 2017. Sound Transit is now developing a new National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Supplemental State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Draft EIS for the BLE. The NEPA EIS process includes a scoping comment period.

NEPA scoping comment period Oct. 24 – Dec. 9 2024

This scoping comment period is intended to collect feedback on the project Purpose and Need, project alternatives, and potential topics to be studied in the BLE Draft EIS. Based on public feedback, we are conducting an extended 45-day comment period.

You may have submitted comments during our previous comment period for NEPA/SEPA scoping in 2019 and/or in response to the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions (WSBLE) Draft EIS in 2022. We will carry forward public feedback and comments collected from the start of the project as part of the ongoing environmental review phase. We invite you to share additional and new feedback with us.

Visit our online open house to learn more about the BLE project, anticipated timeline, and route and station options (also known as alternatives)



soundtransit.org/ballardlink-design



How to comment



Online: soundtransit.org/ballardlink-design



Email: blescoping@soundtransit.org



Mail: Ballard Link Extension,
c/o Lauren Swift, Sound Transit,
401 S. Jackson St. Seattle, WA 98104



Phone: 206-903-7223

Attend a scoping meeting:

Scoping Meeting #1

Nov. 7, 5 – 7 p.m.

Union Station
401 S Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104

Cantonese, Mandarin, and Vietnamese interpretation and translated materials will be available. ASL interpretation will be provided. Refreshments and activities for children will be provided.

Scoping Meeting #2

Nov. 13, 5 – 7 p.m.

National Nordic Museum
2655 NW Market St.
Seattle, WA 98107

ASL interpretation will be provided. Refreshments and activities for children will be provided.

How did we get here?

2018-2019

Early scoping and scoping for the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions (WSBLE) projects.

2022

WSBLE Draft EIS publication and 90-day comment period.

March and July 2023

Following the Draft EIS comment period, the Sound Transit Board directed Further Studies of BLE alternatives which led to Board actions that added new alternatives and modified the preferred alternatives for BLE.

2025

Given additional environmental review needed for project refinements, Sound Transit will publish a new BLE NEPA Draft EIS/SEPA Supplemental Draft EIS, anticipated in 2025.

Project timeline and next steps

At the conclusion of the NEPA scoping process, Sound Transit will publish a new BLE NEPA Draft EIS/SEPA Supplemental Draft EIS in coordination with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), with publication anticipated in 2025. There will be another comment period after the Draft EIS is published in which we will ask for feedback about the potential environmental impacts and benefits of each alternative as well as proposed actions that will help mitigate impacts.

After consideration of the Draft EIS and comments, including relevant comments from the 2022 West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions Draft EIS, the Sound Transit Board will confirm or modify the previously identified preferred alternatives. FTA and Sound Transit will then publish a Final EIS, expected in 2026, that includes responses to the comments received on the Draft EIS. After the publication of the Final EIS, the Sound Transit Board is expected to select the project to build. FTA will then issue a Record of Decision for the project, concluding the environmental process and planning phase.



Questions?

Contact the Community Engagement team:
ballardlink@soundtransit.org or 206-903-7223.

401 S. Jackson St., Seattle, WA 98104 | main@soundtransit.org
[soundtransit.org](https://www.soundtransit.org) | 888-889-6368/TTY: 711 | To request information
in alternative formats call 800-201-4900/TTY: 711 or
email accessibility@soundtransit.org.



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 **SOUNDTRANSIT**

Scoping Purpose and Need



Ballard Link Extension



Project Purpose and Need

In an environmental process, the Purpose and Need statement establishes the basis for developing and evaluating a range of reasonable alternatives for environmental review and assists with the identification of a Preferred Alternative.

The purpose of the project is to expand the Sound Transit Link light rail system from SODO to Ballard, to make appropriate community investments to improve mobility, and to increase capacity and connectivity for regional connections to achieve the following:

- Provide high-quality rapid, reliable, and efficient light rail transit service to communities in the project corridor as defined through the local planning process and reflected in the Sound Transit 3 Plan (Sound Transit 2016).
- Improve regional mobility by increasing connectivity and capacity through Downtown Seattle to meet the projected transit demand.
- Connect regional centers as described in adopted regional and local land use, transportation, and economic development plans and Sound Transit's Regional Transit Long-Range Plan (Sound Transit 2014a).
- Implement a system that is technically and financially feasible to build, operate, and maintain.
- Expand mobility for the corridor and the region's residents, which include transit-dependent residents, low-income people, and communities of color.
- Encourage equitable and sustainable urban growth in station areas through support of transit-oriented development and multi-modal integration in a manner that is consistent with local land use plans and policies, including Sound Transit's Equitable Transit Oriented Development Policy (Sound Transit 2018) and Sustainability Plan (Sound Transit 2019).
- Encourage convenient and safe non-motorized access to stations, such as bicycle and pedestrian connections, consistent with Sound Transit's System Access Policy (Sound Transit 2013).
- Preserve and promote a healthy environment and economy by minimizing adverse impacts on the natural, built, and social environments through sustainable practices.

The project is needed because:

- When measured using national standards, existing transit routes between SODO and Ballard currently operate with poor reliability. Roadway congestion in the project corridor will continue to degrade transit performance and reliability as the city is expected to add about 287,000 people and about 214,000 jobs between 2018 and 2050 (Puget Sound Regional Council 2023).
- Increased ridership from regional population and employment growth will increase operational frequency in the existing Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, requiring additional tunnel capacity.
- Puget Sound Regional Council (the regional metropolitan planning organization) and local plans call for high-capacity transit in the corridor consistent with VISION 2050 (Puget Sound Regional Council 2020) and the Regional Transit Long-Range Plan (Sound Transit 2014a).
- The region's residents and communities, including transit-dependent people, low-income people, and communities of color, need long-term regional mobility and multi-modal connectivity as called for in the Washington State Growth Management Act (Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.108).
- Regional and local plans call for increased residential and/or employment density at and around high-capacity transit stations and increased options for multi-modal access. VISION 2050 has a goal for 65 percent of the region's population and 75 percent of the region's employment to occur in regional growth centers and within walking distance of transit.
- Environmental and sustainability goals of the state and region, as established in Washington state law and embodied in Puget Sound Regional Council's VISION 2050 (2020) and 2022-2050 Regional Transportation Plan (2022), include reducing greenhouse gas emissions by prioritizing transportation investments that decrease vehicle miles traveled.

Visit our online open house to learn more about the BLE project, anticipated timeline, and the route and station options (also known as alternatives) developed based on public and agency feedback since 2017. Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, and Spanish versions of the project Purpose and Need statement can be found on the project online open house as well.



Questions?

Contact the Community Engagement team:
ballardlink@soundtransit.org or 206-903-7223.

soundtransit.org/ballardlink-design



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email accessibility@soundtransit.org.

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 **SOUNDTRANSIT**

Presentation

Ballard Link Extension

*Scoping Meeting #1
11/7/2024*



Agenda

- Project overview
- Environmental review process
- Next steps

Tonight's event

- **Learn:** visit informational materials, ask staff questions
- **Share:** leave a scoping comment on:
 - Latest route and station alternatives
 - Topics to study in the Environmental Impact Statement
 - Project Purpose and Need



Project Overview



Voter-approved system

Link light rail 1 2 3 4 T

- Five lines
- 116 miles
- 83 stations

Sounder trains N S

- Two lines
- 91 miles
- 14 stations

Stride bus rapid transit S1 S2 S3

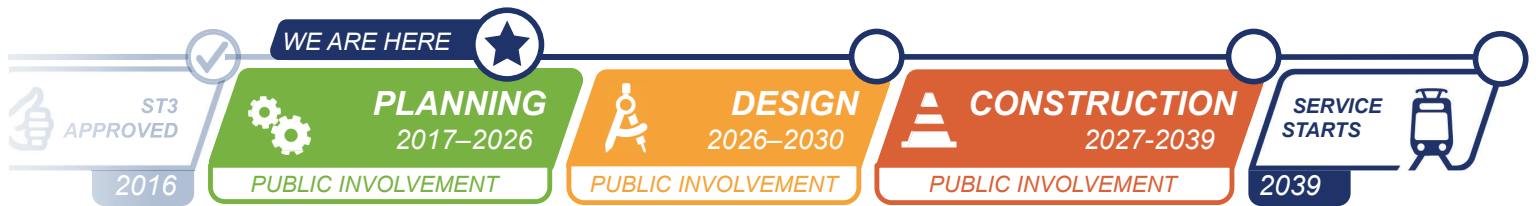
- Three lines
- 45 miles on I-405 and SR 522
- Serving 12 cities and connecting to light rail in Shoreline, Lynnwood, Bellevue, and Tukwila



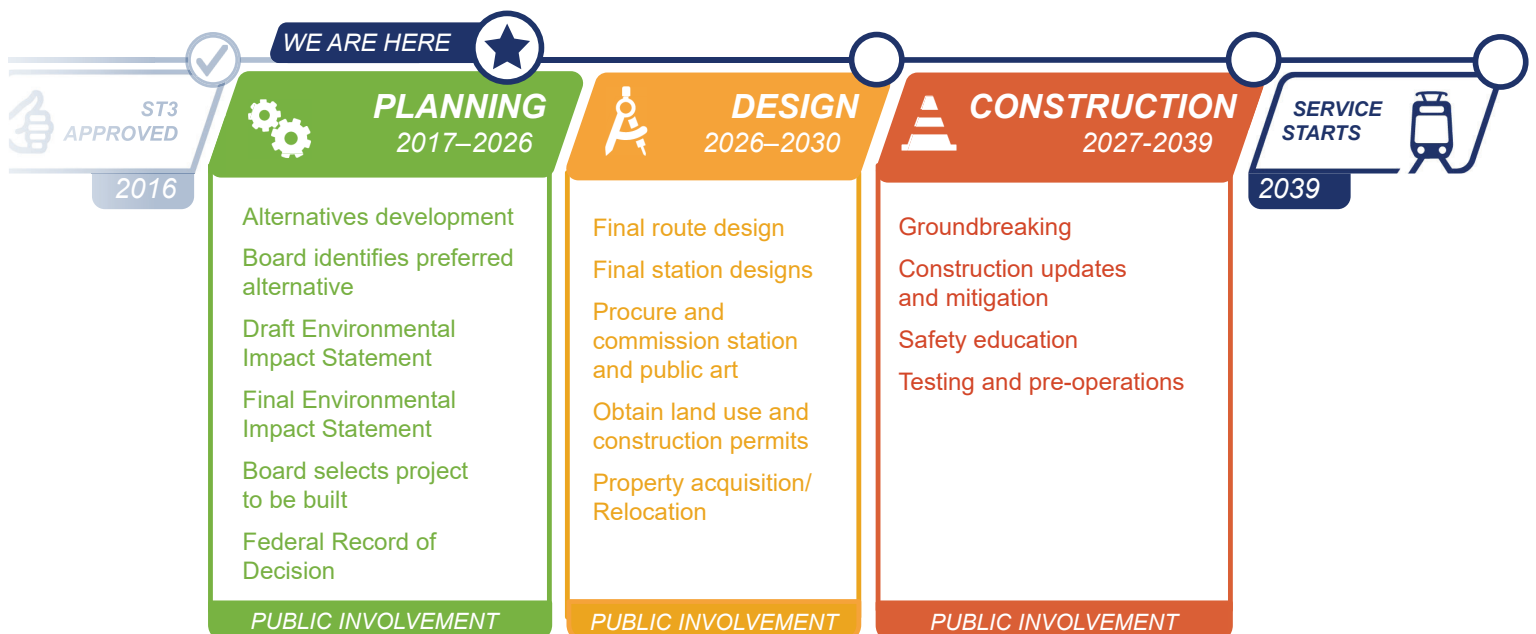
Ballard Link Extension

- ✓ Included in Sound Transit 3 (ST3) voter approved plan.
- ✓ Adds nearly eight miles of light rail service, including a new light rail-only downtown tunnel.
- ✓ Includes nine new stations from Chinatown-International District to Ballard.

Ballard Link Extension project timeline



Ballard Link Extension project timeline



Planning phase

Alternatives development

- **2018:** Early scoping
- **2018-2019:** Neighborhood forums, Stakeholder Advisory Group, Elected Leadership Group
- **2019:** Scoping and public comment period
- **2019:** Board identifies preferred alternatives and other alternatives to study in an environmental impact statement (EIS)

2018: Stakeholder Advisory Group meetings



2019: Scoping meetings



2019-2020: Station planning neighborhood forums

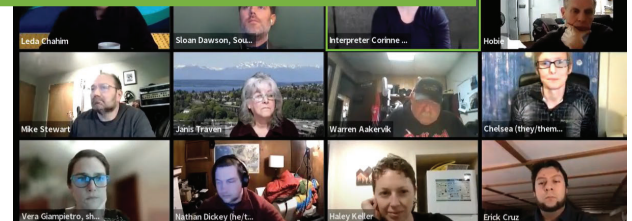


Planning phase

Environmental review

- **2022:** Publish West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions Draft EIS and public comment period
- **2022-2023:** Further studies and community engagement
- **2023:** Board confirms or modifies preferred alternatives for the BLE project

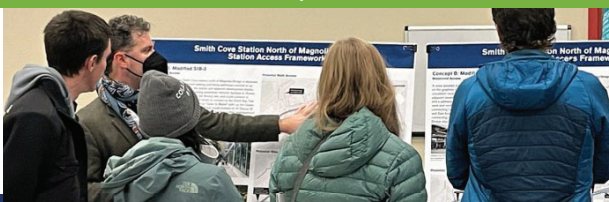
2021-2022: Community advisory groups



2022: Draft EIS open house



2022-2023: Further studies open houses and workshops



Why we are scoping (again)?

Next year, Sound Transit will publish a new BLE Draft EIS that builds upon the 2022 WSBLE Draft EIS with analysis of new alternatives and project refinements.

The first stage in this process is a scoping comment period to collect your feedback. However, we are not starting over.

We have been collecting public input on the project since planning began in 2017, and all past comments will be carried forward in the new BLE Draft EIS.



Environmental review process

So, what's an Environmental Impact Statement?

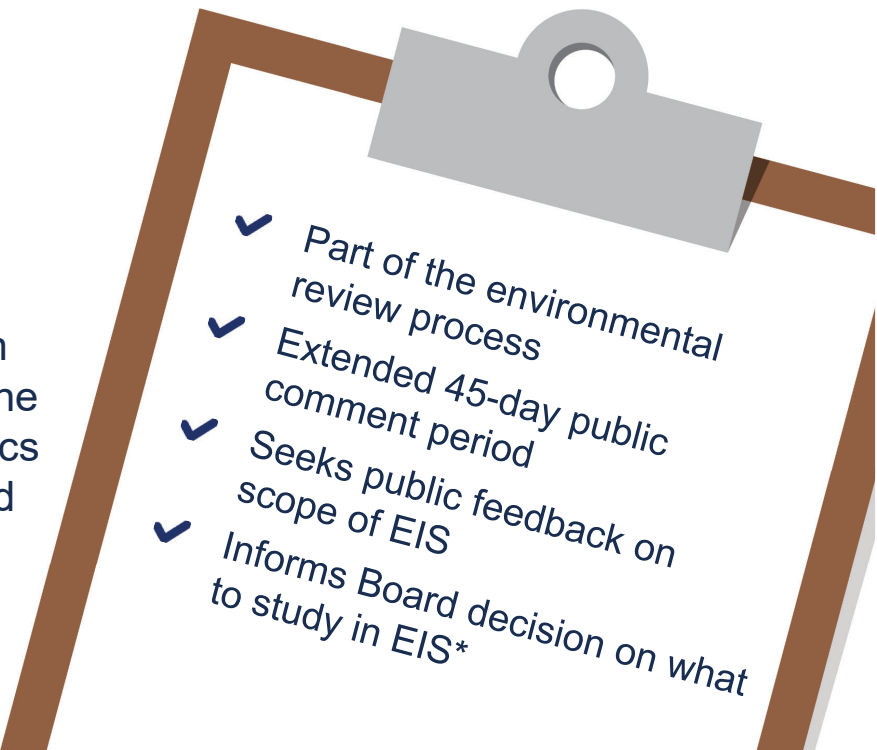
Or, “EIS” for short.

Provides agencies and the public an understanding of environmental consequences and assists in decision-making.

- 
- ✓ Starts with scoping
 - ✓ Range of alternatives
 - ✓ Potential impacts
 - ✓ Potential mitigation

What is scoping?

The EIS scoping period is an opportunity for the public, Tribes and agencies to provide input on the scope of the EIS, including the project's purpose and need, topics or issues to study in the EIS, and light rail route alternatives.

- 
- ✓ Part of the environmental review process
 - ✓ Extended 45-day public comment period
 - ✓ Seeks public feedback on scope of EIS
 - ✓ Informs Board decision on what to study in EIS*

17 * Scope of EIS also subject to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) oversight



What is typically studied in an EIS?

How a project affects...



What is typically studied in an EIS?



Transportation

- Regional transportation
- Transit services
- Arterial and local street systems
- Parking
- Non-motorized facilities
- Safety
- Navigation
- Freight



Natural environment

- Air quality and greenhouse gas emissions
- Ecosystems
- Water resources
- Geology and soils



Built environment

- Acquisitions, displacements and relocations
- Noise and vibration
- Economic effects
- Visual resources
- Parks and recreation
- Land use
- Energy
- Hazardous materials
- Public services, safety, and security
- Historic and archaeological resources
- Social resources, community facilities and neighborhoods
- Electromagnetic fields
- Utilities

Equity and inclusion

Environmental justice focus within each area of the EIS





EIS studies: Environmental justice

- ✓ Describes demographics
- ✓ Evaluates whether project disproportionately impacts low-income and communities of color
- ✓ Considers potential project benefits such as improved access to opportunity
- ✓ Documents what we hear from outreach efforts



Ballard Link Extension alternatives

-  Preferred alternative
-  Other EIS alternatives

Draft EIS alternatives – Ballard Link Extension



Next Steps

Tonight's event

- **Learn:** visit informational materials, ask staff questions
- **Share:** leave a scoping comment on:
 - Latest route and station alternatives
 - Topics to study in the Environmental Impact Statement
 - Project Purpose and Need



How to provide scoping comments

- **Comment online:** soundtransit.org/ballardlink-design
- **Email us:** blescoping@soundtransit.org
- **Leave a voicemail:** 206-903-7223
- **Mail us:** Ballard Link Extension, c/o Lauren Swift,
Sound Transit, 401 S. Jackson St.,
Seattle, WA 98104
- **Join us at our second scoping meeting:**
Nov. 13, 5 – 7 p.m.
National Nordic Museum, 2655 NW Market St.

Thank you.



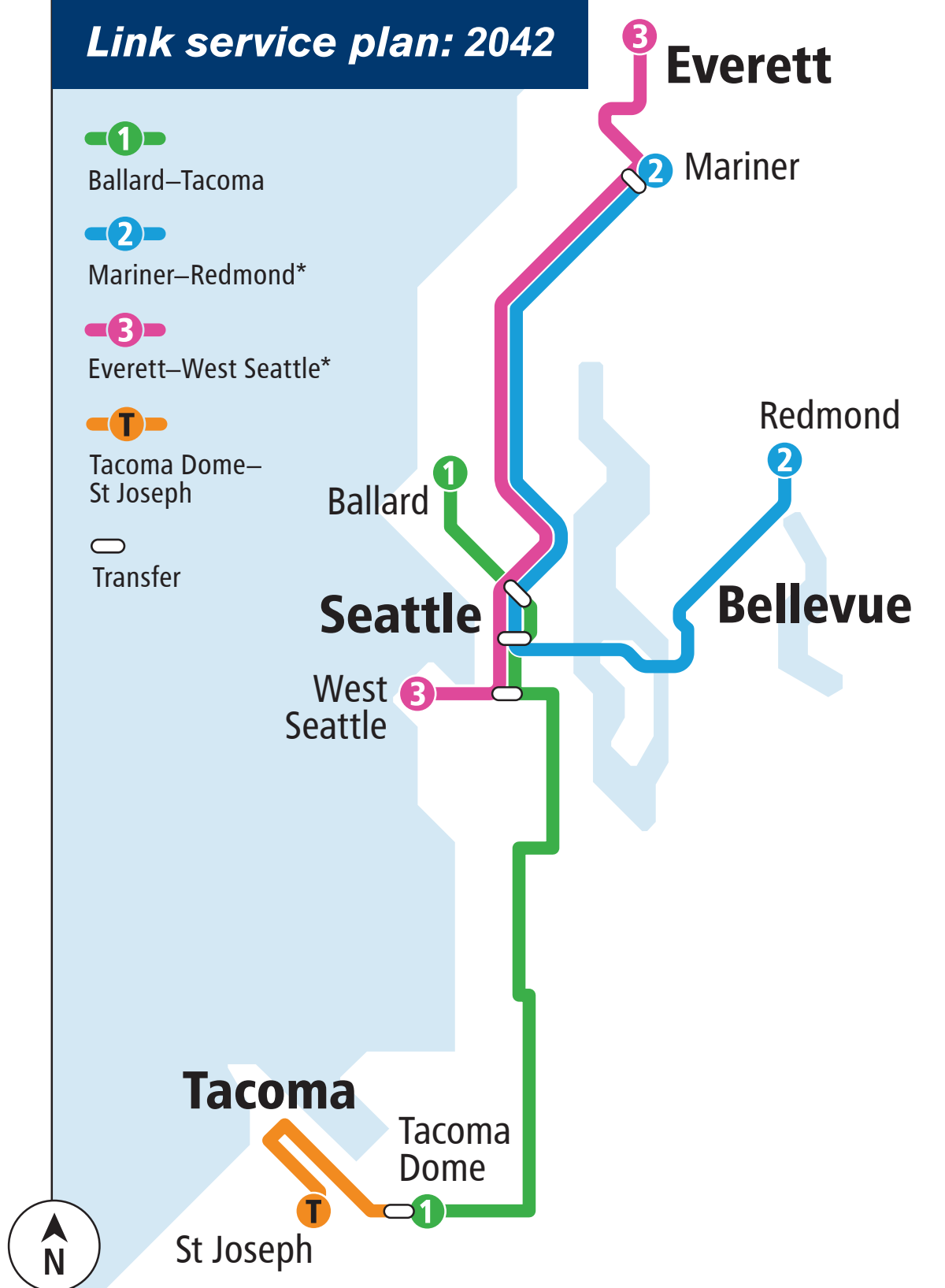
 soundtransit.org



Display Boards

Sound Transit future service

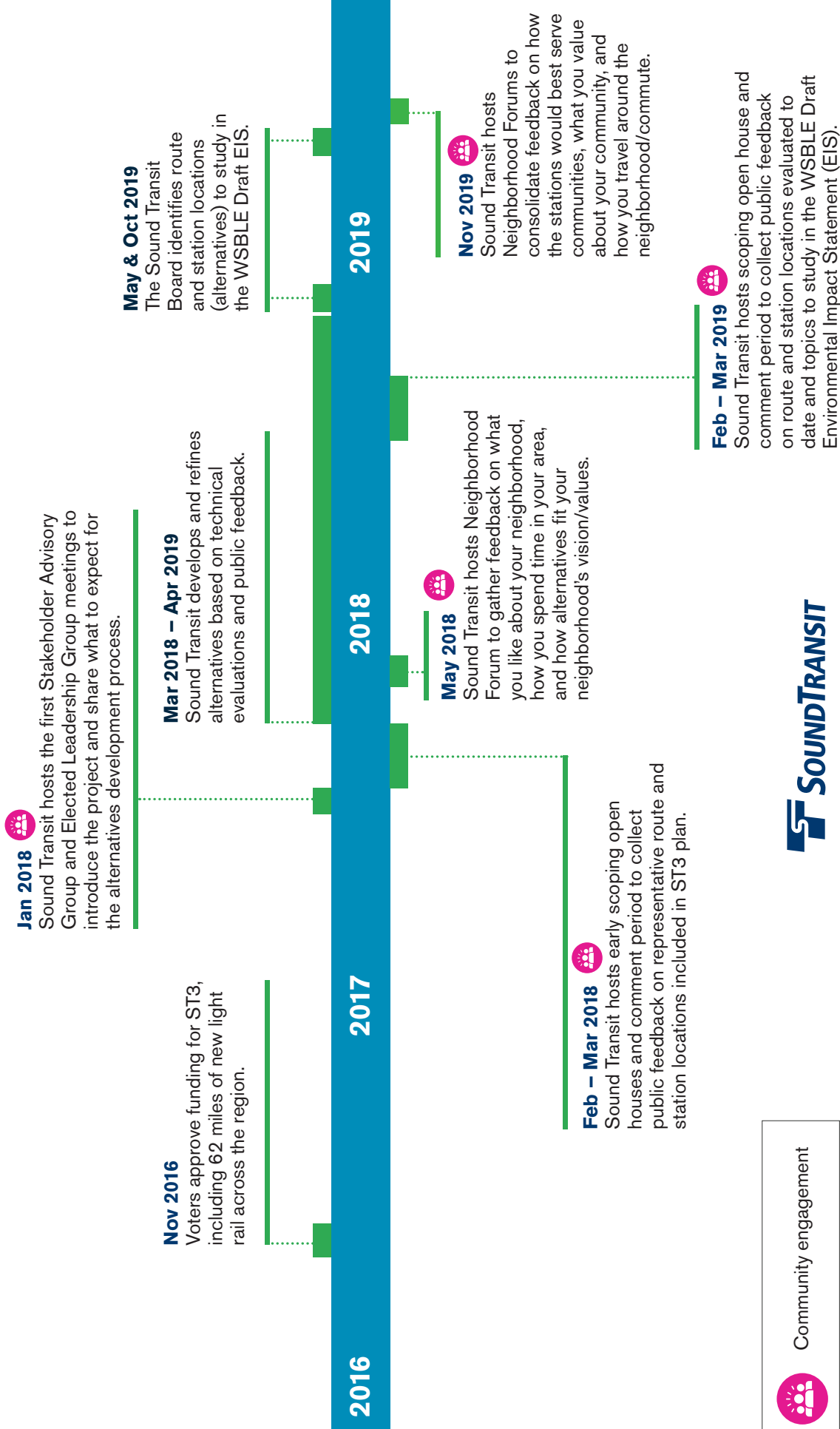
Link service plan: 2042



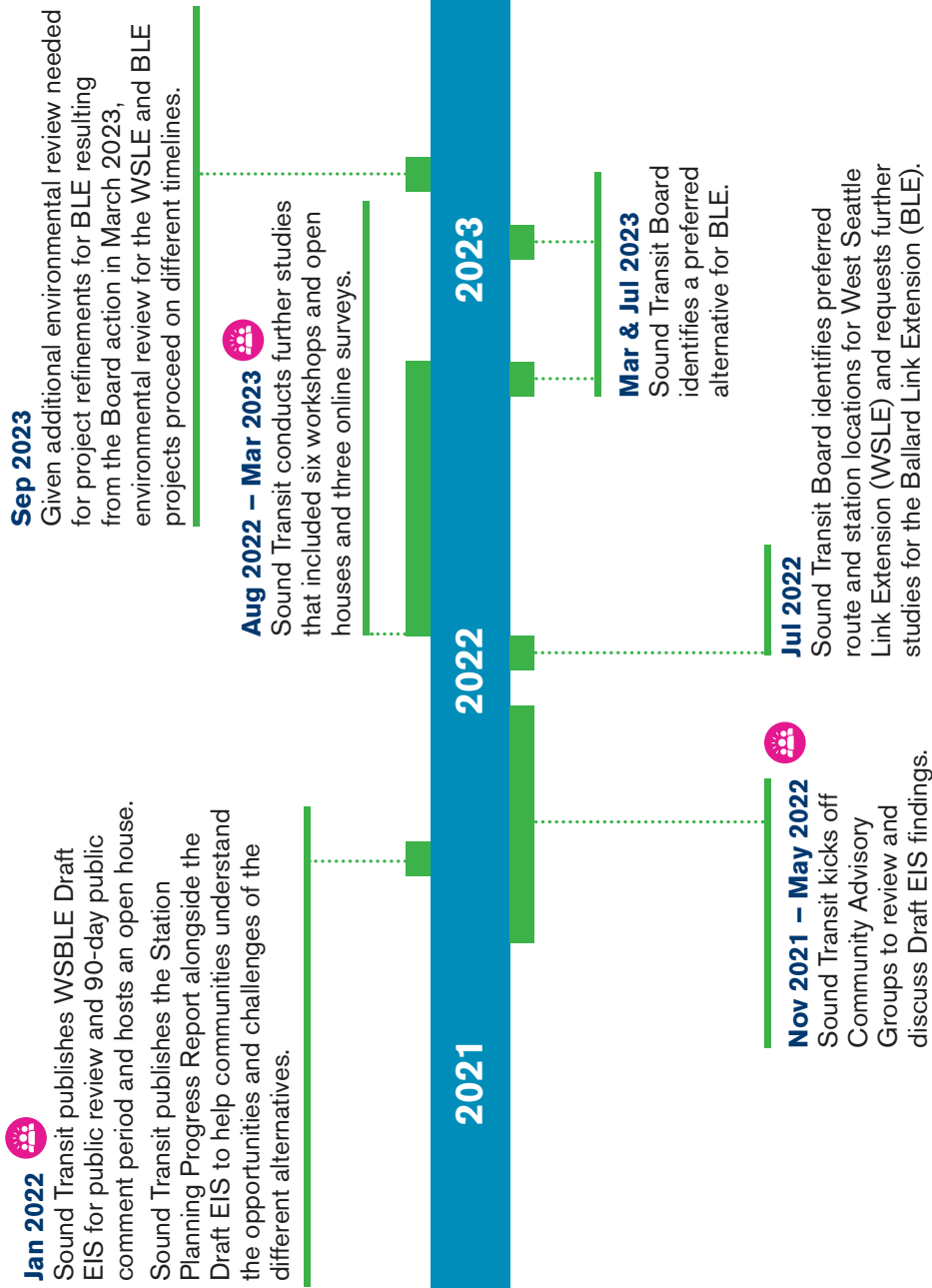
Ballard Link Extension project timeline



West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions alternatives development



West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions Draft EIS



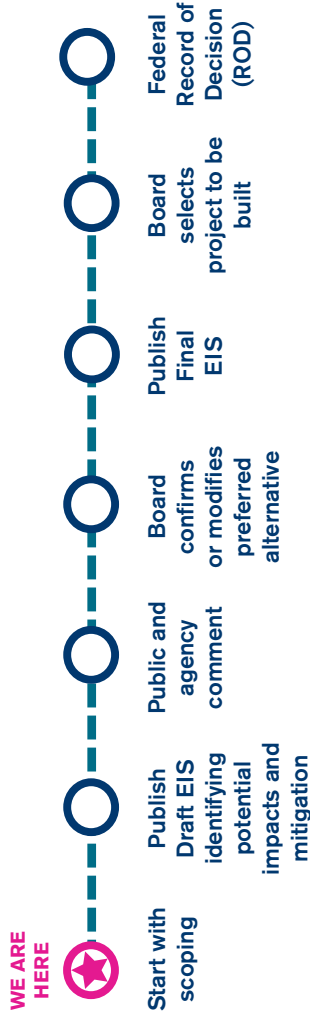
The EIS process

What is an EIS?

In partnership with the Federal Transit Administration, we will publish a new National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Supplemental State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Draft EIS for the Ballard Link Extension with analysis of new alternatives and project refinements.

The Draft EIS will provide agencies and the public with an understanding of environmental consequences and assist in decision making.

The EIS process:



What's typically studied in an EIS?



Transportation

- Regional transportation
- Transit services
- Arterial and local street systems
- Parking
- Non-motorized facilities
- Navigation
- Freight



Natural Environment

- Air quality and greenhouse gas emissions
- Ecosystems
- Water resources
- Geology and soils



Built Environment

- Acquisitions, displacements and relocations
- Noise and vibration
- Economic effect
- Visual resources
- Parks and recreation
- Land use
- Energy
- Hazardous materials
- Public services
- Historic and archaeological resources
- Social resources, community facilities and neighborhoods
- Electromagnetic fields
- Utilities

What is NEPA scoping?

Why are we scoping (again)?

Next year, Sound Transit will publish a new BLE Draft EIS that builds upon the 2022 WSBLE Draft EIS with analysis of new alternatives and project refinements.

The first stage in this process is a scoping comment period to collect your feedback. **However, we are not starting over.**

We have been collecting public input on the project since planning began in 2017, and all past comments will be carried forward in the new BLE Draft EIS.

For the BLE, scoping is:

- ✓ A part of the federal environmental review process
- ✓ An extended 45-day public comment period
- ✓ A process that seeks public feedback on the scope of the EIS
- ✓ Something that informs Board decision on what to study in EIS*

* Scope of EIS also subject to Federal Transit Administration oversight



What feedback is collected during the scoping comment period?

The **scoping comment period** seeks feedback related to...

- Project Purpose and Need
- Alternatives to be studied in the EIS
- Potential topics to study in the EIS

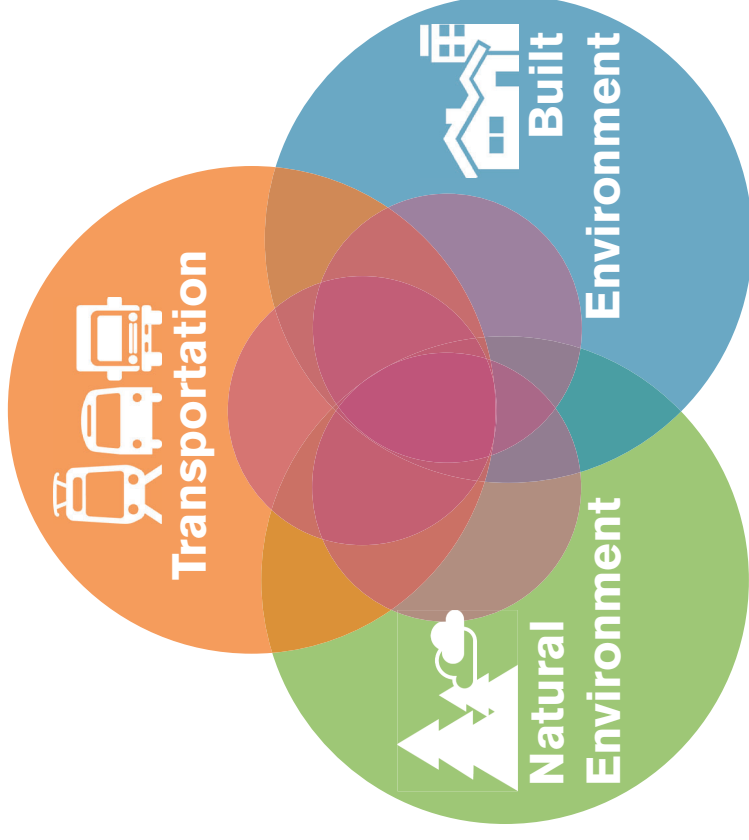
The **Draft EIS comment period**, anticipated in 2025, seeks feedback on:

- Potential environmental impacts and benefits of each alternative
- Proposed actions that will help mitigate impacts

Environmental Justice in the EIS

*In an **Environmental Impact Statement**, the **Environmental Justice** chapter:*

- ✓ Describes demographics
- ✓ Evaluates whether project disproportionately impacts low-income and communities of color
- ✓ Considers potential project benefits such as improved access to opportunity
- ✓ Documents what we hear from outreach efforts



***There's an environmental justice focus
within each area of the EIS***

Comment here!

Share your NEPA scoping comments with a court reporter tonight!



What's a helpful comment during the scoping period?

①

Feedback related to the project Purpose and Need

②

Feedback related to the alternatives to be studied in the EIS

③

Feedback related to potential topics to study in the EIS

You can also provide scoping comments before Dec. 9 by:



Filling out a comment card



Commenting online: soundtransit.org/ballardlink-design



Emailing us: blescoping@soundtransit.org



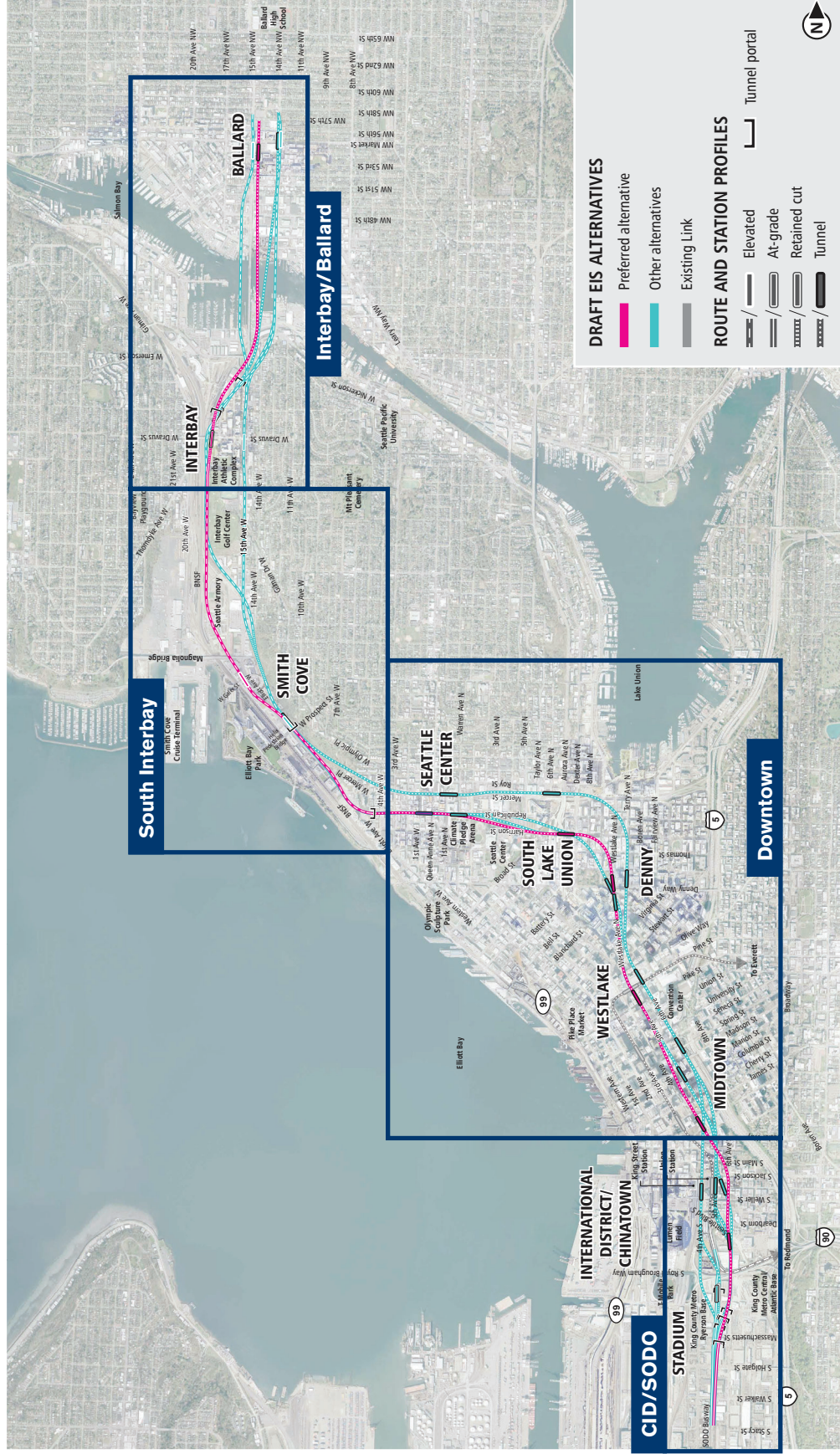
Leaving a voicemail: 206-903-7223



Mailing us: Ballard Link Extension
c/o Lauren Swift
Sound Transit, 401 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104

Ballard Link Extension route and station alternatives

Your feedback helped get us here!

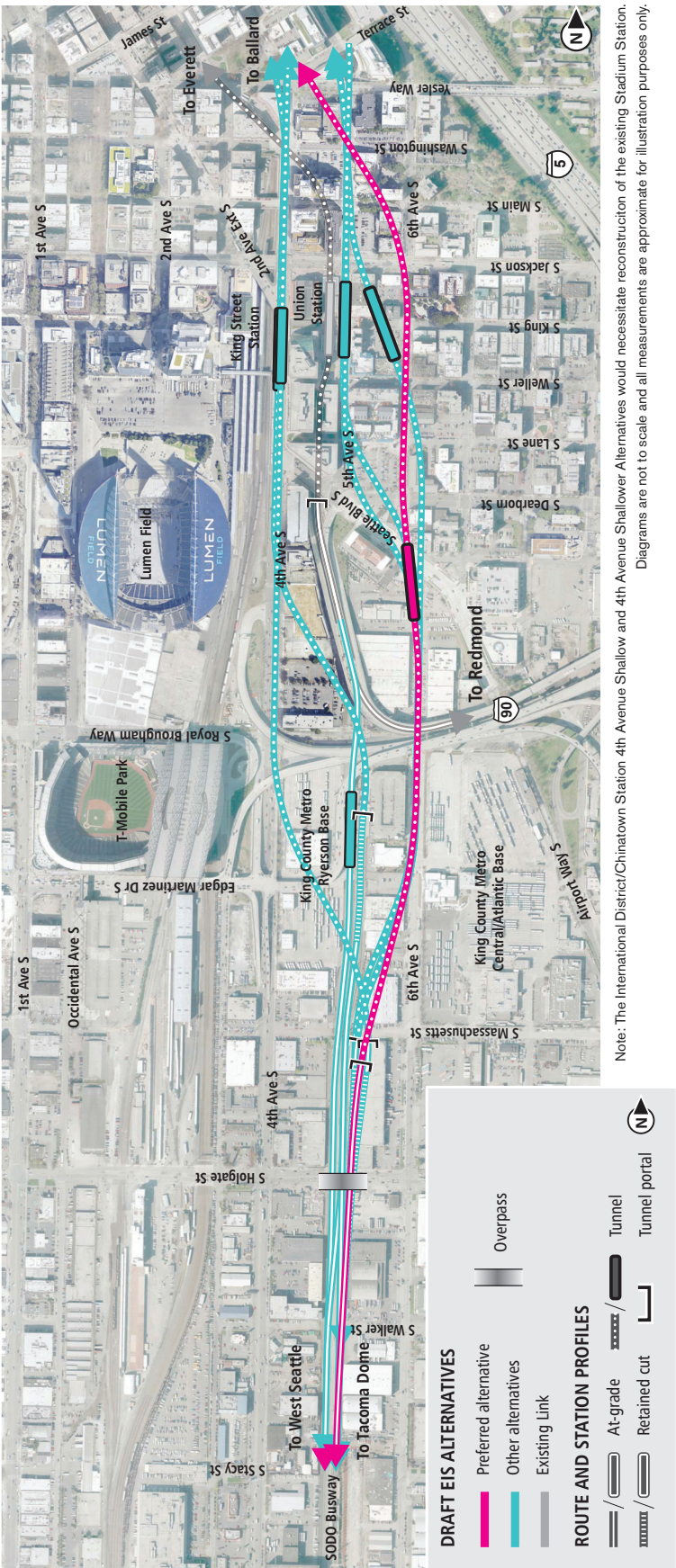


Diagrams are not to scale and all measurements are approximate for illustration purposes only.

10/2024

Ballard Link Extension alternatives in CID/SODO

Your feedback helped get us here!

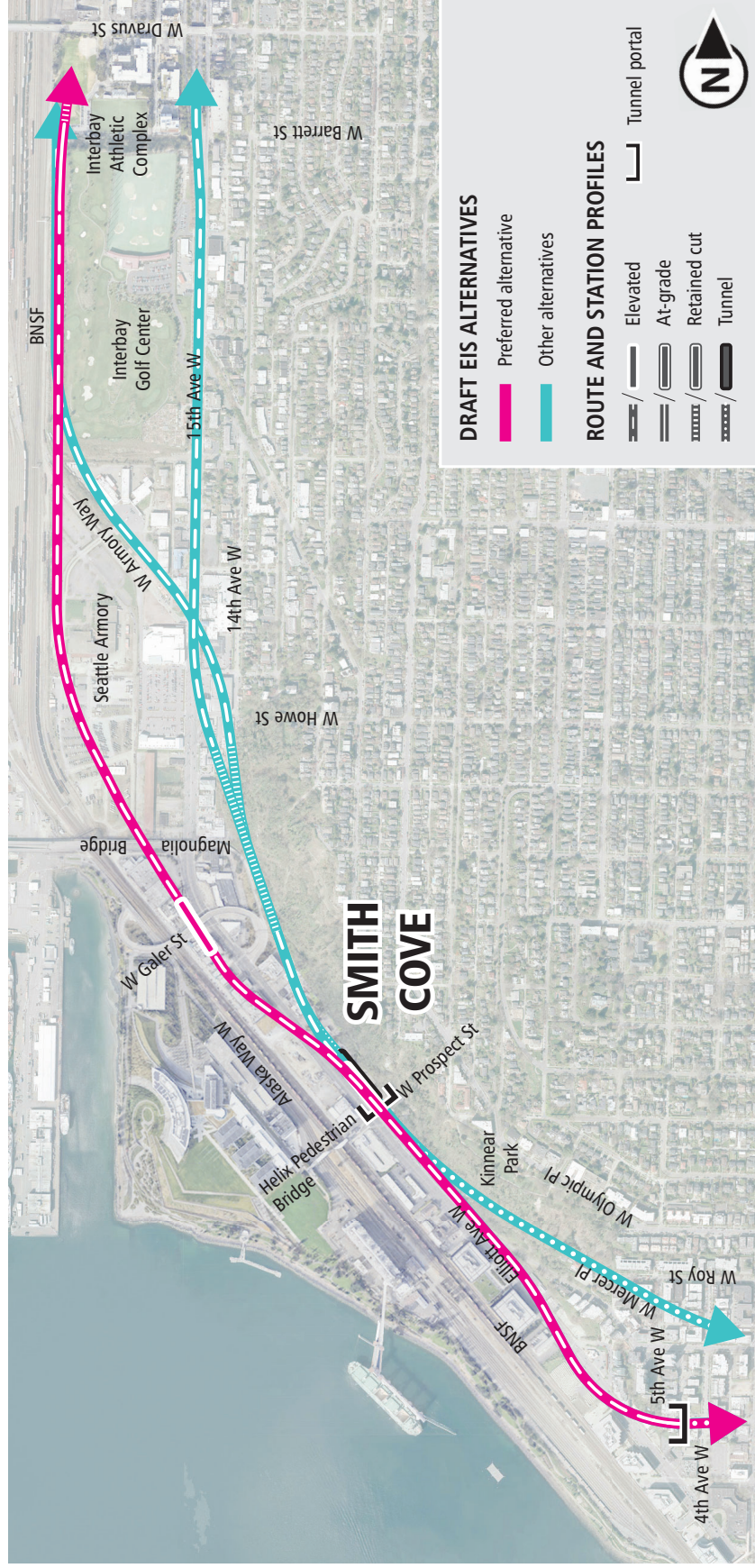


Your feedback helped get us here!



Ballard Link Extension alternatives in South Interbay

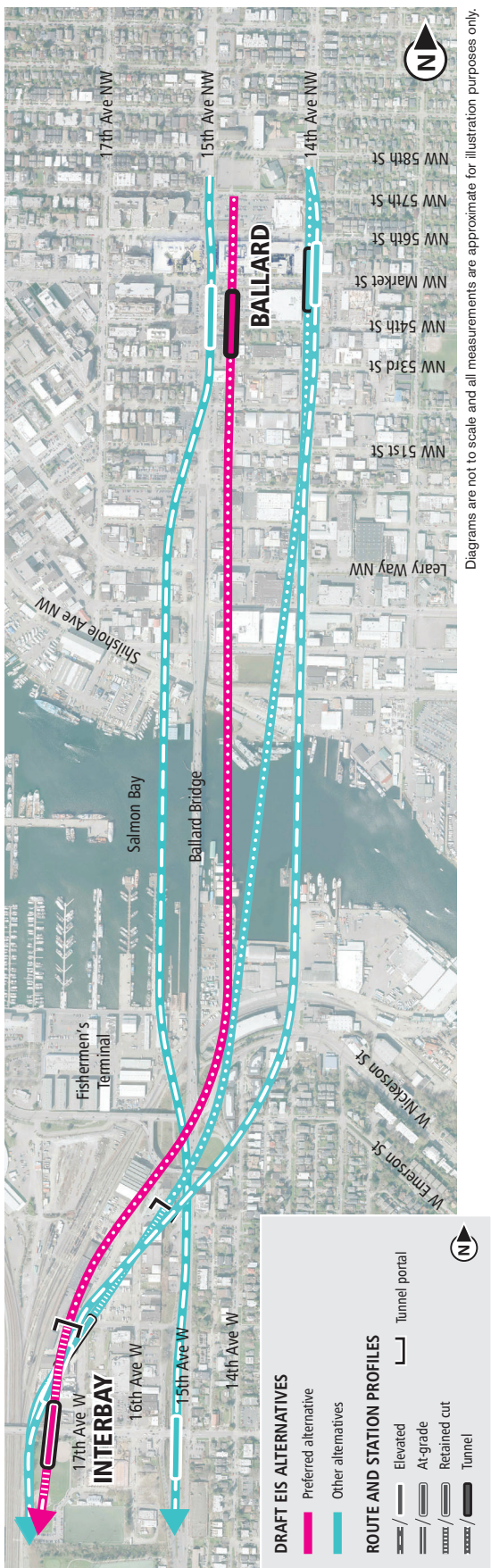
Your feedback helped get us here!



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

Ballard Link Extension alternatives in Interbay/Ballard

Your feedback helped get us here!



Project fact sheet



Ballard Link Extension

Expanding light rail in Seattle

About the project

The Ballard Link Extension will provide fast, reliable light rail connections to dense residential and job centers between Chinatown-International District and Ballard. In addition, a new downtown Seattle light-rail only tunnel will increase capacity and improve efficiency for the entire regional system.

CURRENT PHASE

Planning: Environmental review

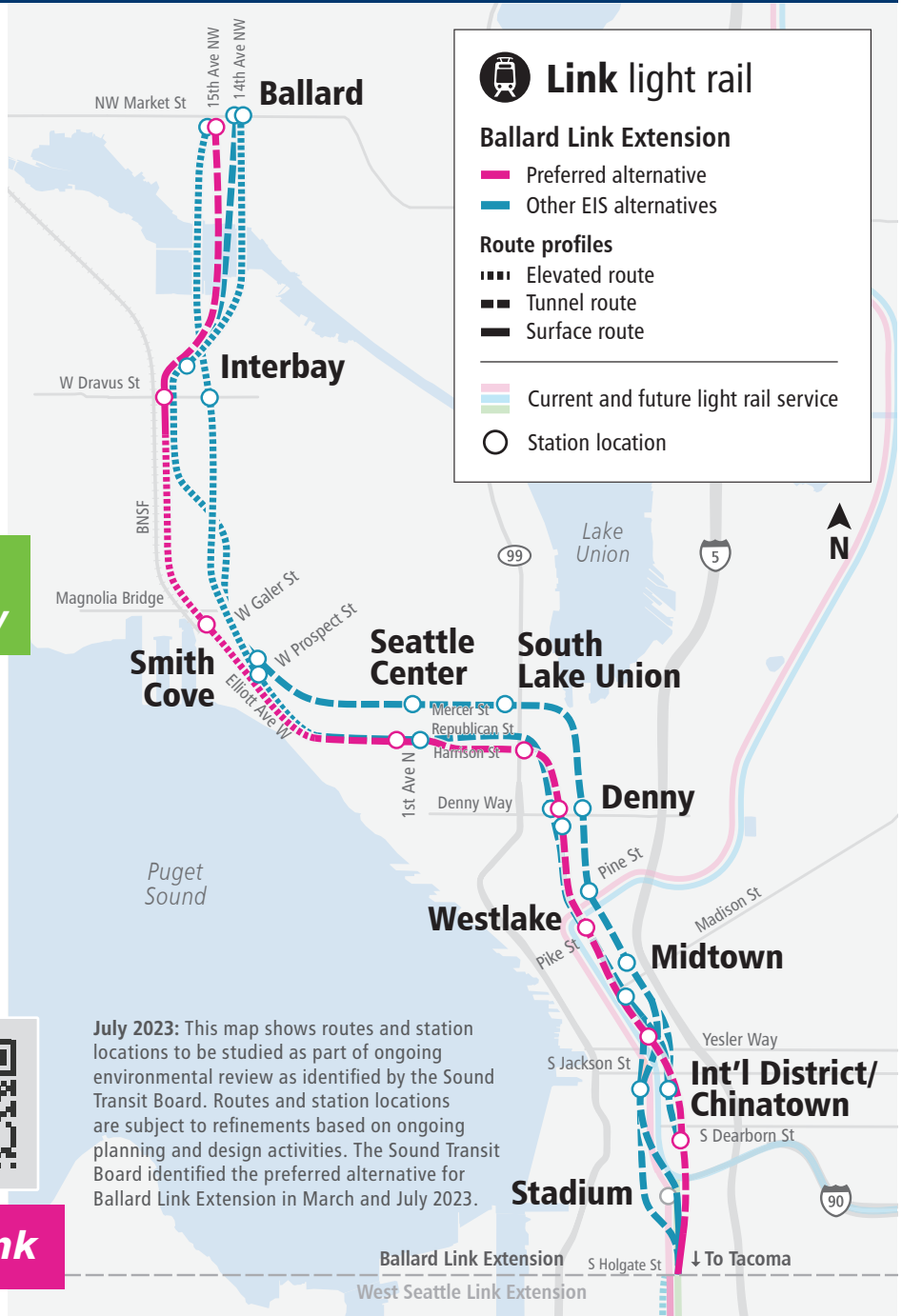
Project benefits

- **Adds 7.7 miles of light rail service** from downtown Seattle to the Ballard neighborhood, including a new downtown Seattle rail-only tunnel.
- **Includes nine new stations** from Chinatown-International District to Ballard.

Learn more, subscribe for email updates, and find out how to get involved:



soundtransit.org/ballardlink



Project timeline





Link passengers board and disembark a train at Roosevelt Station.

What's next for Ballard Link?

A new Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be completed for Ballard Link. Service is scheduled to start in 2039.

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.

Questions?

Contact the Community Engagement team:
ballardlink@soundtransit.org or 206-903-7223.

401 S. Jackson St., Seattle, WA 98104 | main@soundtransit.org
[soundtransit.org](https://www.soundtransit.org) | 888-889-6368/TTY: 711 | To request information
in alternative formats call 800-201-4900/TTY: 711 or
email accessibility@soundtransit.org.

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 were evaluated together in a Draft EIS published in January 2022. The public comment period lasted for 90 days between January and April 2022.

The Sound Transit Board requested further studies for the Ballard Link Extension (BLE) in July 2022. 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 and July 2023. Given additional environmental review needed for project refinements for BLE, environmental review for the West Seattle Link Extension and BLE projects are proceeding on different timelines.



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 **SOUNDTRANSIT**

Scoping comment form



Ballard Link Extension

Share your scoping comments by Dec. 9, 2024

在12月9日前分享您對範圍界定的意見

在12月9日前分享您对范围界定的意见

Hãy chia sẻ ý kiến của quý vị về việc xác định phạm vi chậm nhất vào ngày 9 tháng 12

Comparta sus comentarios sobre el alcance antes del 9 de dec. de 2024

Optional/選修的/选修的/Không bắt buộc/Opcional

Please provide your contact information and check the box below if you would like to receive project updates.

如果您想要獲取項目的更新資訊, 請提供您的聯絡資訊, 並勾選下列方塊。

如果您想收到項目的更新信息, 請提供您的联系信息并勾选下面的方框。

Vui lòng cung cấp thông tin liên lạc của quý vị và đánh dấu vào hộp bên dưới nếu quý vị muốn nhận thông tin cập nhật về dự án.

Proporcione su información de contacto y marque la siguiente casilla si le gustaría recibir las últimas noticias del proyecto.

Name/姓名/姓名/Tên/Nombre _____

Organization/ 機構/组织/Tổ chức/Organización _____

Address/地址/地址 /Địa chỉ/Dirección _____

Email/電子郵件/电子邮箱 /Email/Correo electrónico _____

Phone/電話/电话 /Điện thoại/Teléfono _____

- ☐ Sign me up for Ballard Link Extension email updates
- ☐ 注册以接收Ballard Link擴展項目的最新消息電子郵件。
- ☐ 注册以接收Ballard Link扩展项目的最新消息电子邮件。
- ☐ Đăng ký nhận thông tin cập nhật qua email về Dự Án Mở Rộng Tuyến Ballard Link.
- ☐ Regístrenme para recibir por correo electrónico las últimas noticias de la Extensión de Link a Ballard

Thank you for taking the time to comment!

Cảm ơn quý vị đã dành thời gian đóng góp ý kiến!

感謝您撥冗發表意見! 感谢您拨冗发表意见! ¡Gracias por tomarse el tiempo para hacer comentarios!



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

ballardlink@soundtransit.org or 206-903-7223.



Appendix C: Online Open House

About the Ballard Link Extension

The **Station Link Extension (SLE)** will provide fast, reliable light-rail connections to dense residential and job centers in the Chatterton-International District (CID), Downtown, Midtown, and Ballard neighborhoods. In addition, a new downtown Seattle light-rail tunnel will provide capacity for the entire regional system to operate efficiently. The SLE is part of the Sound Transit 3 system expansion approved by voters in November 2010. The project is currently in the planning phase.

- Includes new rail stations from Chavante International District to Ballard
- Will greatly improve local and regional travel service frequency, reliability, and capacity
- Facilitates redevelopment near stations, focusing on equitable transit-oriented development (or TOD)
- Start of service is scheduled for 2030

Ballard Link Extension project timeline

Start with a list of 10 items.

- **Alternative development**
- 10th Street identifies preferred and other WBLB Draft EIS alternatives
- WBLB Draft EIS available comment period
- Further Studies
- 10th Street modifies the Preferred Alternative for BLS

2024-2026 BLE Planning

- [illegible]

2026-2030 Design

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare final design and construction contracts • Obtain land use and construction permits • Begin property acquisition / relocation • Advance utility relocation / early work contracts | <p>will publish a new RFP (not this one) including a public comment period to gather feedback on the environmental impacts and benefits of each alternative and</p> |
|---|---|

2027-2029 Construction

- Direction and clearing where necessary to build and spread the light of guidance
- Each work such as alternative systems, column footings, retaining walls and forming
- Tailways and station construction
- Ongoing conversations with anyone affected by construction
- Safety education
- Regular communication efforts

2020 Start of Service



NEPA scoping

For those following along, we have done project writing before. In 2018 and 2019, Sound Transit hosted [writing sprints](#) and offered a summer period to collect [public feedback](#) on the Third Seattle and Ballard Light Extensions (SHELE) project. What does the second round of writing look like to BLET? Many of you have provided thoughtful comments and feedback over several years of engagement. Your input, concerns, and ideas have, and will continue to, inform the BLET Draft EIS alternatives and Sound Transit Board decisions. As we enter this new second round, we invite others to [share their views](#) and [provide feedback](#) with us.

After release of the [WVSE Draft EIS](#) and a 30-day comment period in 2022, the Sound Transit Board directed Further Studies of SLT alternatives. These Further Studies led to Board actions in March and July 2023 which added new alternatives and modified the preferred alternatives for the SLT. As a result, it was determined that the WVSE and SLT projects would remain in their separate environmental review locations. The West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) proceeded to a Final EIS, and the SLT

Scoping offers an opportunity to gather feedback on project alternatives, project purpose and need, and potential benefits and impacts to study at the beginning of the environmental review process. Suncor-Tandem is planning for this scoping process and public comment period by preparing materials and engagement opportunities to inform community members about the BCE project.

At the conclusion of the NEPA scoping process, we will prepare a Draft EIS in coordination with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), with publication anticipated in 2025.

What feedback is collected during the scraping comment period?

- | During the scoping (consultation) period, consider feedback related to... | The draft EIS (consultation) period, anticipated in 2020, consider feedback on... |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Purpose and Need Alternatives to be studied in the EIS Potential issues to study in the EIS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential environmental impacts and benefits of each alternative Proposed actions that will help mitigate impacts |

Project purpose and need

[illegible]

- When measured using cultural standards, existing vari-

- Business expansion in the private sector will contribute to a growth in productivity and innovation as the need to expand to meet international demand increases.
- Increased reliance on foreign capital and export-led growth will increase operational resilience in the mining, resources, tourism and transport sectors, requiring additional foreign capacity.
- A major focus of regional growth also regional infrastructure planning, including roads and air-ports will be high-priority, mirrored in the national plan with VNR020 (2020) (Major Road Network Growth Plan) (2020) and the Regional Transport Planning (RTP) (2020).
- The region's trade and communities, including labour-dependent people, low income people, and communities of colour, need targeted support to ensure that the region's economic growth can be sustained in the Washington State Global Management and Development Goals (Washington SM DMA 2020).
- Regional and local plans will be developed to consider residential and employment density of and around high-potential labour stations and investment options for rural coastal areas. VNR020 (2020) has a goal to lift the region's population to 70 per cent of the regional population by 2050, with a target of 10 per cent of the population living in the urban and labour stations.
- Environmental and sustainability goals of the state and region, as established in Washington state law and articulated in VNR (2020) Regional Strategy (VNR019 (2020), 2020) and R2020-09 Regional Transport Plan (2020), include reducing greenhouse gas emissions by providing transportation alternatives that decrease reliance upon vehicles.

How did we get here?

- **Sound Transit's 2015** is approved by voters. This year includes adding 52 new miles of light rail, including more than 100 miles with new 55 stations added to the region. **Wash 2016** also gives includes the West Seattle Link and Ballard Link Extension (2019-22) projects, other projects like the bus Rapid Transit (2017) or the Everette, additional capacity for the Sounder South line, and access improvements to stations for all modes of transit.

- October 2017: West Seattle Link and Ballard Link Extensions moved to the planning phase of the project. The

- *phase 1* – part of the *Public Trust Administration of 17 Environmental Issues* process.
 - *January 2010* – *Second Trust Board* and the *Joint Database Advisory Group* and *Joint Database Group* – meeting to discuss the project and establish the *Joint Database* and the *Joint Database Group*.
 - *January 2010* – *March 2010* – *Second Trust Board* holds *early* *scoping* open houses and a comment period to collect public feedback on the ETS representative project and gather issue ideas for information development at additional needs and status meetings.
 - *January 2010* – *April 2010* – *Second Trust Board* develops and releases preliminary draft technical evaluation, as well as feedback from the public, *Database Advisory Group*, *Electrical Licensing Group*, and *Second Trust Board of Directors*. The project group then through three levels of evaluation to better inform scoping and keeping to collect public feedback.
 - *February 2010* – *March 2010* – *Second Trust Board* *scoping* open houses and a comment period to collect public feedback on the alternative data and reports to study, in the *Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)*.
 - *April 2010* – *November 2010* – *Second Trust Board* develops the *alternative*, *evaluation*, *needs*, *public feedback*, and the *alternatives* of the *Database Advisory Group* and develops the *public feedback* and other *alternatives* into the *WISMS (2010-2015)*.
 - *July 2010* – *October 2010* – The *Second Trust Board* develops and to conduct *initial assessments* on additional needs and status and to conduct *initial assessments* on additional needs and status.

2022 - 2023 WISLE Draft Environmental Impact Statement

- [illegible]

2023 - 2026: Ballard Link Extension (BLE)'s Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement

- December 2019 The Second Transit Board directs Second Transit staff to conduct a feasibility study of a new alternative location in the area of SR-Aurora North and Highway 140 for the South Lake Union (SLU) Station. Transit the [Transit Station](#) for more information.

Alternatives

Choose a segment below to view the BLE results and status options. The preferred alternative indicates a preference for the alternative based on currently available information, and is not a decision on the project to be built.

CD9000

Download

Comment

We are now collecting your feedback to identify potential alignment and where our study of BtE alternatives meets 2017. As part of our environmental review process, we have a range of alternatives that are being carried forward into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) scoping. This scoping comment period is intended to collect feedback on the [draft BtE alternatives](#) and potential topics to be studied in the BtE Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Billed Link Extension Scoping Comment Form" in a teal header. The form contains the following fields:

- 1. First Name: A text input field.
- 2. Last Name: A text input field.
- 3. Email: A text input field.
- 4. City/State: A text input field.
- 5. Include your scoping comment: A large text area.

At the bottom of the form is a blue "Submit" button. Below the button is a small blue icon of a person and a horizontal progress bar with three segments, the first of which is filled.

Email: journal@wiley.com
 Website: <http://www.intellect.com>

Web: <http://www.bell.com>

Nov 7 (Nov 5 - 7 p.m.)	Nov 13 (Nov 5 - 7 p.m.)
Green Station 401 S. Jackson St. Seattle, WA 98104	National Nordic Museum 2655 N.W. Market St. Seattle, WA 98107
Crafts, music, and folk songs; interactive and translational materials will be available. ASL interpretation will be provided. Refreshments and activities for children will be provided.	ASL interpretation will be provided. Refreshments and activities for children will be provided.

There will be another comment card after the Staff PSE is published where you will share information and rate for feedback also.

the potential environmental impacts and benefits of each alternative as well as proposed actions that will help mitigate impacts.

Additional Studies

HLA Further Studies (2012 – 2023)

In July 2012, the Science Transfer Board decided the project team to complete additional father studies. Staff held community workshops, open houses, stakeholder meetings and surveys between September 2012 and January 2013.

The on-oneness of the father studies conducted for both on-oneness and the results, read the [Father Studies Executive Summary](#) and reports in the [Father Studies Assessment Summary](#). Descriptions and key findings for each father study are included below by segment.

Downloaded from <http://www.sagepub.com> at 01:00 11 September 2015

South Lake Union Additional Studies

In 2023 and 2024, the Sound Transit Board directed the project team to study additional station locations and alignment concepts in the South Lake Union area. Materials from these further study periods are included below.

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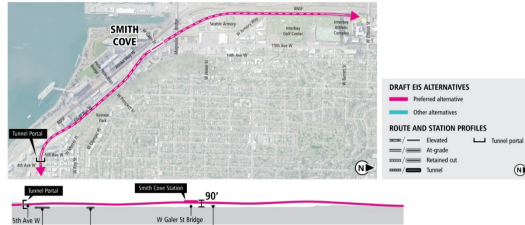
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South Interbay

Preferred Alternative: Galer Street Station/Central Interbay

The Galer Street Station/Central Interbay Alternative would exit a tunnel portal at West Republican Street and Elliott Avenue West and transition to an elevated guideway. The guideway would continue northwest along Elliott Avenue West to an elevated Smith Cove Station at the West Galer Street Flyover. The elevated track would continue north over the Magnolia Bridge, through the Interbay Armory, and along the west side of the Interbay Athletic Complex.

Station location: The station at Smith Cove would be located above and straddling the West Galer Street Flyover.



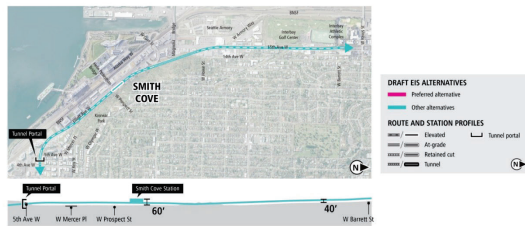
Diagrams are not to scale and all measurements are approximate for illustration purposes only. | Click on image to enlarge

South Interbay - Other alternatives

Prospect Street Station/15th Avenue

The Prospect Street Station/15th Avenue Alternative would exit a tunnel portal at West Republican Street and Elliott Avenue West and transition to an elevated guideway. The guideway would continue northwest along Elliott Avenue West and enter the Smith Cove Station just north of West Prospect Street. From the Smith Cove Station, the elevated guideway would transition into a retained cut before again becoming an elevated guideway in the center of 15th Avenue West.

Station location: The elevated station at Smith Cove would be located north of Kinnear Park on the east side of Elliott Avenue West.



Diagrams are not to scale and all measurements are approximate for illustration purposes only. | Click on image to enlarge

Prospect Street Station/Central Interbay

The Prospect Street/Central Interbay Alternative would continue as a tunnel from downtown to a tunnel portal on the east side of Elliott Avenue West near West Prospect Street. The alternative would continue north from the tunnel portal in a retained cut to the Smith Cove Station just north of West Prospect Street. From the station, the alternative would transition to an elevated guideway and continue north along West Armory Way and west of the Interbay Athletic Complex to connect to the Elevated 14th Avenue Alternative in the Interbay/Ballard segment.

Station location: The retained cut station in Smith Cove would be located north of West Prospect Street on the east side of Elliott Avenue West.



Diagrams are not to scale and all measurements are approximate for illustration purposes only. | Click on image to enlarge

The alternatives presented were developed through years of planning and community engagement. To learn more about the alternatives raised but not carried forward for study in the Draft EIS, see [Further Studies, Community Engagement Summary \(2023\)](#), and [Appendix M](#) from the previous WSLE Draft EIS.

General questions? Contact us:

Sound Transit Community Outreach
Phone: 206-903-7223
Email: ballardlink@soundtransit.org
Web: soundtransit.org/ballardlink
Subscribe to email updates: soundtransit.org/subscribe

Need accessibility/assistance online or at an in-person event?

Contact the outreach team:
Phone: 206-903-7223
Email: ballardlink@soundtransit.org

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Email: main@soundtransit.org
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