

Planning for Light Rail: **Adopting the West Seattle Link Extension Project**

CB 121003 | Res 32172

Seattle City Council Transportation Committee | June 17, 2025

Agenda

1. **ST3 City Team:** City Legislation to Support ST3 Projects
 - Transit Way Agreement
2. **Sound Transit:** Project Overview
 - Alignment of guideway and stations
 - Community engagement & property acquisition highlights
3. **Next Steps**



Sound Transit 3 in Seattle

In 2016, over 70% of Seattle voters said yes to ST3.

ST3 is the largest infrastructure investment program in Seattle's history. These projects, including the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions, bring tremendous opportunity to transform how people reach their homes, jobs, and destinations.

The **ST3 City Team** is an interdepartmental *One Seattle* effort that partners with Sound Transit to help deliver these investments to Seattle communities. Led by the Office of the Waterfront, Civic Projects, and Sound Transit, the ST3 City Team relies on leadership and subject matter expertise across dozens of City departments.



City Legislation to Support ST3 Projects

2025

- Land use code amendments for light rail facilities (*Leads: SDCI, OWCP&ST*)
- **Adoption of the West Seattle Link Extension project** (*Lead: OWCP&ST, SDOT*)
- ST3 City Team staff and resource plan (*Leads: OWCP&ST, SDOT, CBO*)

2026-2027

- Adoption of the S Graham Street infill station project and the Ballard Link Extension project (*Lead: OWCP&ST, SDOT*)
- Various agreements for property/ROW transfers, joint development, other partnerships (*Leads: FAS, SPR, OPCD, others*)



Adopting the WSLE Project

City departments may not issue permits to Sound Transit for construction until City Council adopts the project. Necessary steps:

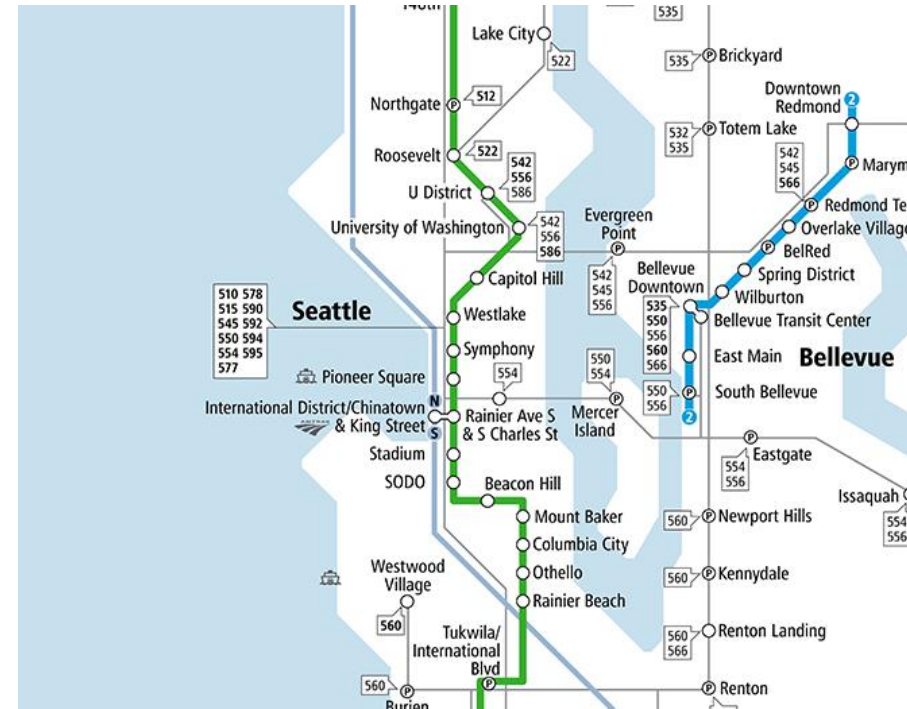
- Sound Transit Board adopts a Project to Be Built.
- Federal Transit Administration publishes a Record of Decision.
- **Seattle City Council appends the project into the Transit Way Agreement by ordinance and adopts the project alignment by resolution.**
- City departments may issue permits.



Adopting the WSLE Project

What is the Transit Way Agreement?

- Agreement under which the City grants Sound Transit the non-exclusive use of a light rail transit way within City right-of-way.
- Grant of City right-of-way is defined in attachments describing each link and providing maps and drawings.
- Agreement has been amended four times to include alignments for the initial light rail and the addition of new links.



TWA Legislative History

[Ord 119975](#) (2000) established the original Transit Way Agreement for the Central Link

[Ord 120788](#) (2002): Technical Corrections

[Ord 122504](#) (2007): Amendment 1 revising Central Link to include University and North Link Extensions

[Ord 124289](#) (2013): Amendment 2 adding Northgate Link Extension and portion of East Link Segments

[Ord 125500](#) (2017): Amendment 3 adding Lynnwood Link Extension

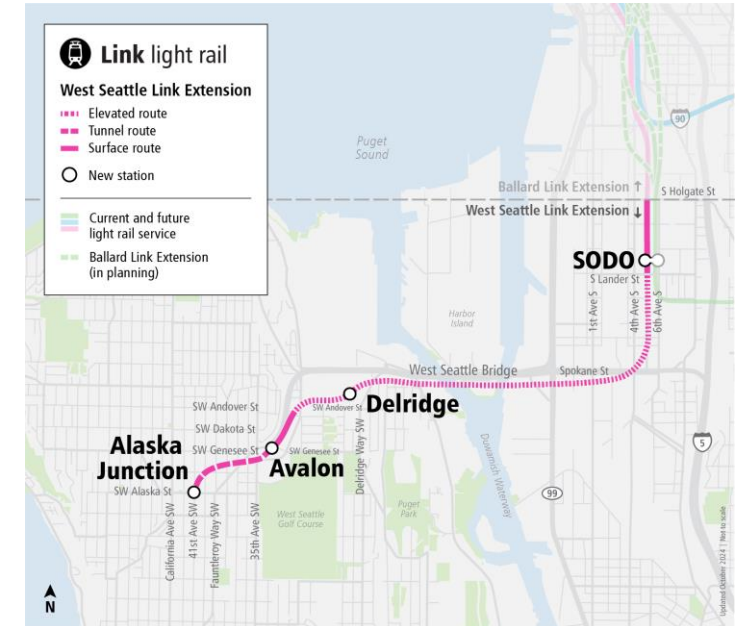
[Ord 126701](#) (2022): Amendment 4 adding NE 130th St Infill Station as part of Lynnwood Link Extension

Adopting the WSLE Project

What is before City Council today?

- The proposed Resolution formally approves the West Seattle Link Extension alignment, as adopted by the Sound Transit Board ([R2024-22](#), October 2024). The Resolution adds the new West Seattle Link alignment, specifying the locations of stations and guideways.
- The proposed Ordinance authorizes the SDOT Director to execute an amendment to the Transit Way Agreement (Amendment No. 5) to incorporate the West Seattle Link Extension into the existing Transitway Agreement. This Amendment allows City departments to begin the permitting process.

WSLE Project Alignment



Future project changes

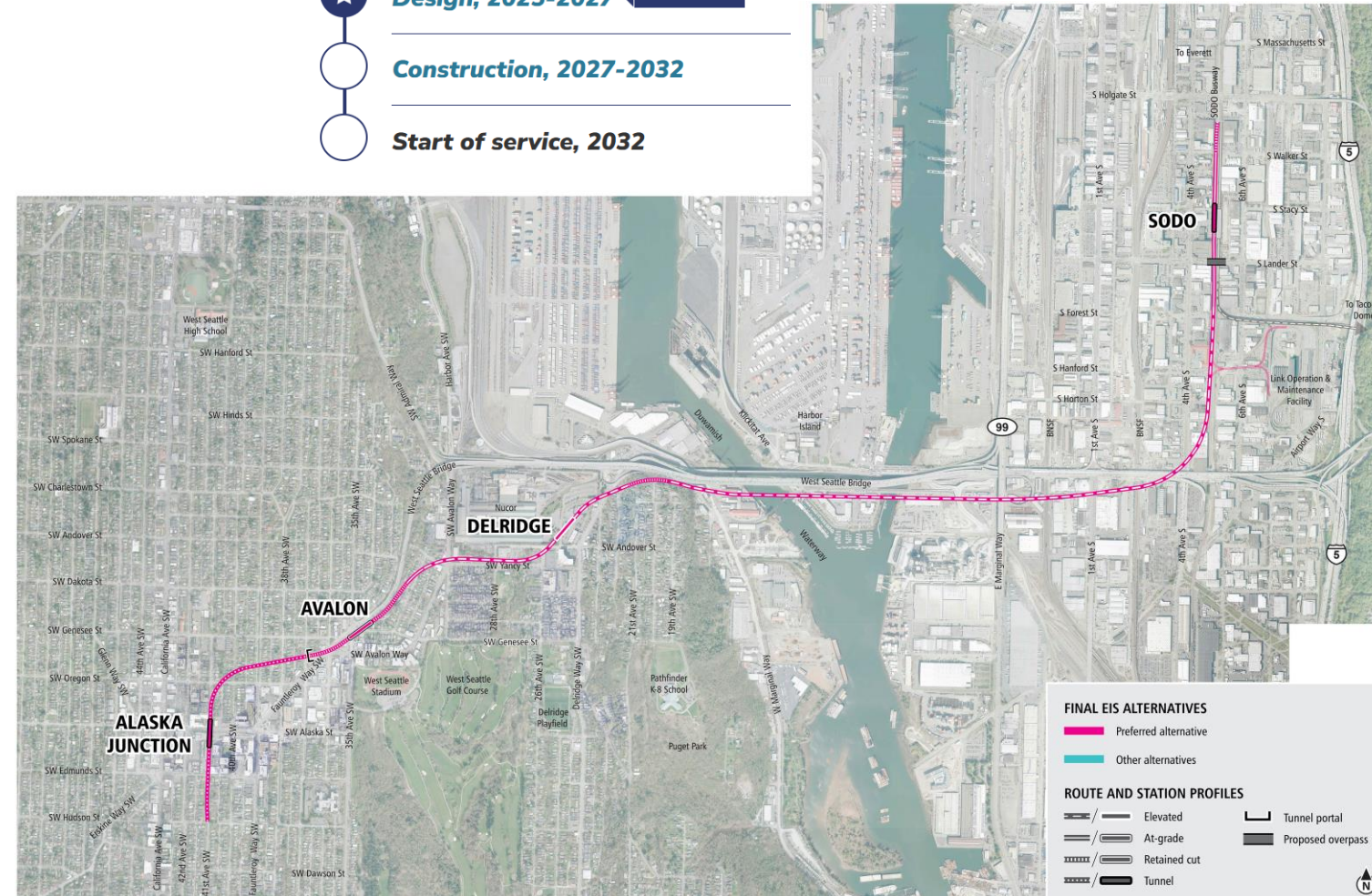
If the Sound Transit Board modifies the project in the future, the City will need to amend the Transit Way Agreement to attach new exhibits.

WSLE Project Overview

WSLE will provide fast, reliable light rail connections to dense residential and job centers in the SODO, Delridge, and West Seattle neighborhoods.

- Adds 4.1 miles of light rail service from SODO to West Seattle's Alaska Junction neighborhood.
- Includes four new stations from SODO to Alaska Junction.
- Start of service scheduled for 2032.

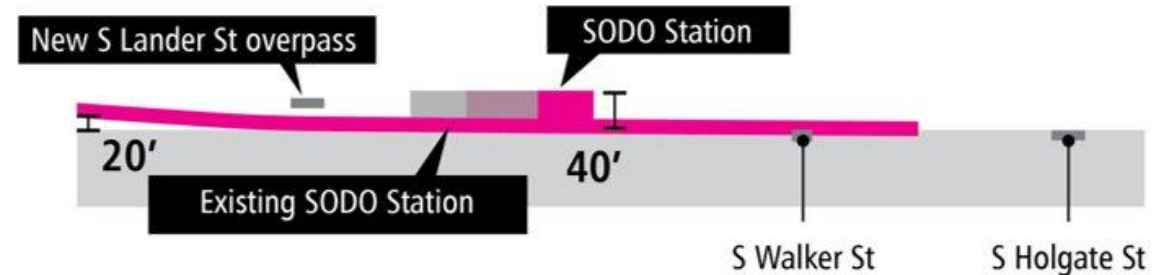
Timeline and milestones



SODO Segment

ALIGNMENT of GUIDEWAY & STATIONS:

- At-grade guideway from South Walker Street to South Forest Street
- New at-grade station immediately west of existing SODO station, north of Lander Street
- Future transfer between 3-Line (West Seattle to Everett) and 1-Line (Ballard to Tacoma)



ROUTE AND STATION PROFILES

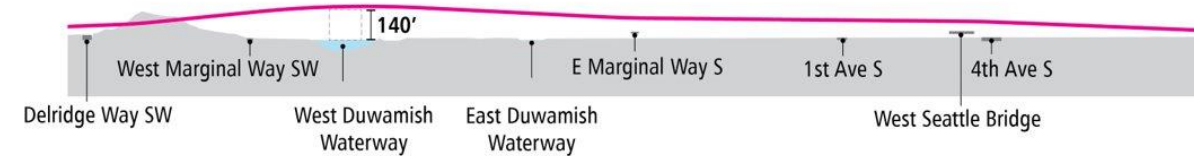
	Elevated		Tunnel portal
	At-grade		Proposed overpass
	Retained cut		
	Tunnel		

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

Duwamish Segment

ALIGNMENT of GUIDEWAY & STATIONS:

- Tracks transition to an elevated guideway south from S Forest Street.
- Connection to the Operations and Maintenance Facility Central provided between S Forest St and S Spokane St.
- The route continues southwest to cross over to the south side of the West Seattle Bridge on a light rail only bridge.
- The route crosses the north edge of Pigeon Point, then turns southwest on an elevated guideway that crosses Delridge Way SW.



ROUTE AND STATION PROFILES

	Elevated		Tunnel portal
	At-grade		Proposed overpass
	Retained cut		
	Tunnel		

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

Delridge/WS Junction

ALIGNMENT of GUIDEWAY & STATIONS:

- Elevated Delridge station north of SW Andover Street and west of Delridge Way SW.
- Tracks transition from elevated guideway along SW Yancy St to an at-grade and then retained cut guideway at Avalon.
- Lidded retained cut Avalon station south of SW Genesee St and beneath 35th Ave SW.
- Retained cut guideway continues to tunnel portal west of Avalon station.
- Tunnel Alaska Junction station beneath 41st Ave SW and SW Alaska Street.



ROUTE AND STATION PROFILES

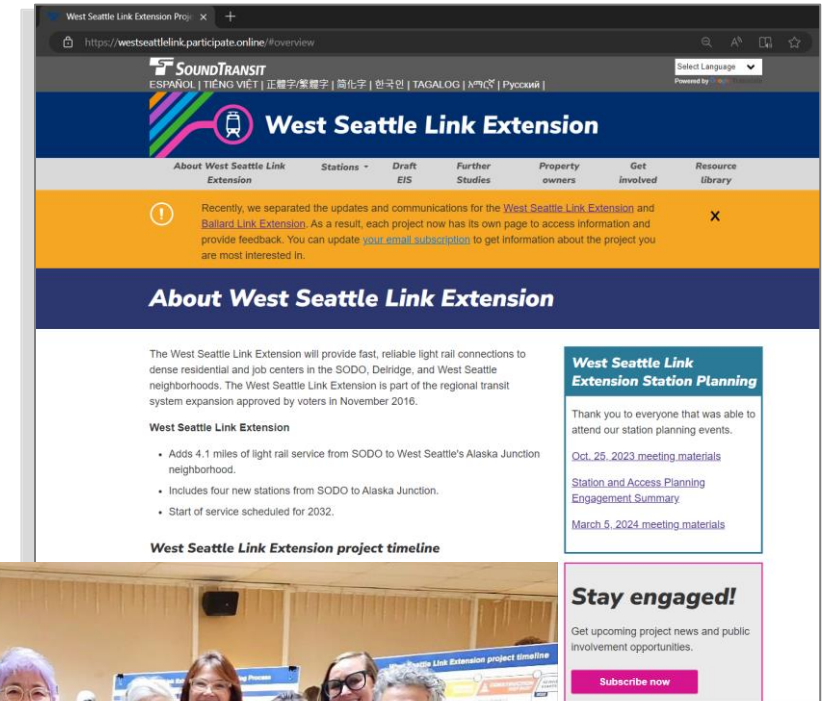
	Elevated		Tunnel portal
	At-grade		Proposed overpass
	Retained cut		
	Tunnel		

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

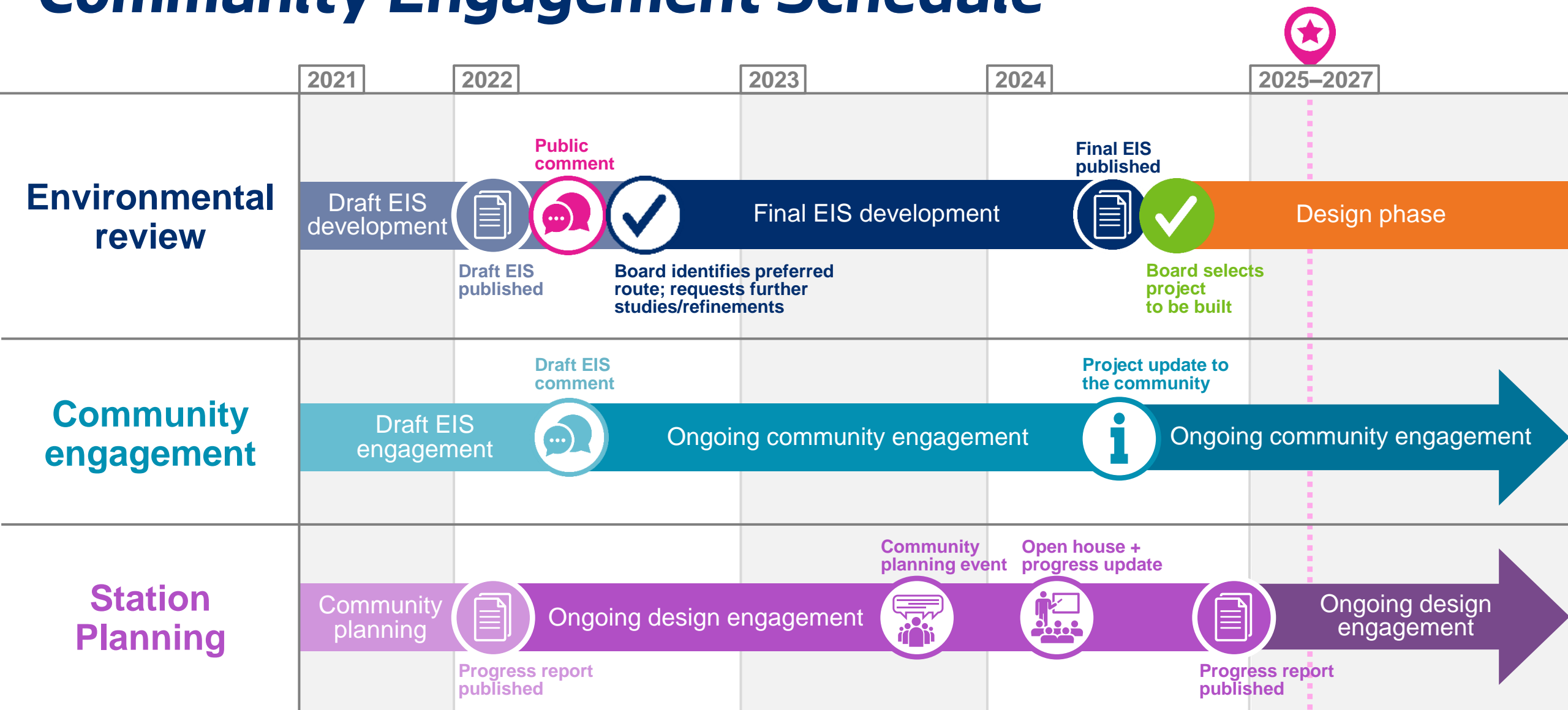
Engaging community throughout planning

Ways we've engaged

- **Stakeholder and Community Advisory groups**
- **Community briefings** with residents, businesses, community organizations, property owners and more
- **Public meetings:** Neighborhood forums, open houses, drop-in sessions
- **Online:** Project website, online open house, email updates, social media
- **Community liaisons**
- **Translated materials and interpretation**
- **Door-to-door business outreach**
- **Fairs, festivals and other events**



Community Engagement Schedule



Acquisition and relocation timeline



Pre-Draft EIS release (Fall 2021)

Sound Transit **contacts potentially affected property owners**



Draft EIS release (Early 2022)

Sound Transit Board **confirms or modifies preferred alternative**



Final EIS release (2024)

Sound Transit Board **selects project to be built**



Final design (2025-2027)

- Sound Transit **identifies property rights needed to construct, operate and maintain the system**
- Sound Transit Board **authorizes property acquisition**
- Sound Transit will **prepare an appraisal** to determine fair market value of property needed for the project
- Sound Transit will provide **relocation assistance** to people and businesses displaced by the project, including referrals to comparable properties and payment of moving costs
- Sound Transit **staff are available to support property owners and tenants** through this process

Next Steps

July 2025: Transportation Committee and Full Council consideration and vote

Q3/Q4 2025: WSLE permitting begins

Additional questions or comments?

Office of the Waterfront, Civic Projects, & Sound Transit

- Sara Maxana, *Sound Transit Program Director*
- Saranya Rajan-Gujuluva, *West Seattle Link Extension Project Manager*
- Chris Gregorich, *ST3 Government and Community Relations Manager*

Sound Transit

- Jason Hampton, *High-Capacity Transit Development Manager*
- Leda Chahim, *Deputy Executive Director – Government & Community Relations*

A blue-tinted photograph of a city street scene. In the foreground, a group of pedestrians is walking on a sidewalk. A tram is moving along the street, featuring a colorful advertisement for the 'Jim Henson Exhibition' and 'MUSEUM OF POP CULTURE' by 'Imagination Unlimited'. The tram's destination sign reads 'THE UNION'. In the background, there are modern buildings, a construction crane, and traffic lights.

From the entire ST3 City Team:
Thank you!