

System Expansion Program

Seattle City Council Briefing
2/23/2026



Why are we here

- ***Sharing information on the Enterprise Initiative***
- ***Providing updates on major capital projects in the City of Seattle***

2026 Openings

Upcoming openings



Judkins Park Station and the Crosslake Connection are scheduled to open on Saturday, March 28



Pinehurst Station is finishing construction and on track to open by Q3 2026



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

Enterprise Initiative

Enterprise Initiative

What is the Enterprise Initiative?

- Sound Transit's effort to ensure we can deliver the greatest benefits of ST3 within available financial capacity
- A comprehensive effort touching planning, capital, operations, maintenance, and finance to ensure we are meeting both current and future regional mobility needs

Why are we undertaking the Enterprise Initiative?

- If we don't act, the ST3 program will be unaffordable
- We have the tools to successfully manage these challenges, and we will be able to create an affordable plan and operate a dependable, resilient, and safe system

Leading indicators of program affordability challenges

Need for an enterprise approach

- Cost growth on West Seattle Link and Board direction to investigate cost savings opportunities in late 2024
- Rapid system expansion and challenges with delivering resilient, dependable service
- Poorer revenue projections and national and global economic uncertainty
- Post-Covid mobility environment and ensuring that ST3 investment meet regional transportation needs



Quantifying our affordability challenges

The following summarizes unmitigated cost pressures across the major elements of our Long-Range Financial Plan

- **\$34.5B in cost savings and new funding required to fully fund ST3 program**
- Cost growth on the capital program is approximately \$14B-\$20B more in 2025 dollars, or \$22B-\$30B more in year-of-expenditure dollars
- Cost pressures related to improved service delivery could require approximately \$5B more in year-of-expenditure dollars
- Updated revenue projections and financing improvements included since August have increased agency financial capacity by \$4B

\$149B in total year-of-expenditures dollars is projected to be affordable, including \$51B in pre-baselined capital projects.

M2025-36: Board principles and timeline

Principles

- Advance regional connectivity
- Support future growth
- Prioritize the passenger experience
- Protect public investments with fiscal integrity
- ST3 performance characteristics

Process elements

- Engage communities through inclusive collaboration
- Build trust through transparent governance
- Drive decisions with data and insight

Timeline

- A comprehensive framework to deliver the Enterprise Initiative: **Fall 2025**
- An updated ST3 System Plan: **by the end of Q2 2026**
- A new Regional Transit Long-Range Plan: **in Q3 2026**
- An updated Long Range Financial Plan: **in Q4 2026**

Enterprise Initiative workstreams

	Planning & Policy	Capital Delivery	Service Delivery	Finance
What will this workstream entail?	Reviewing existing plans, policies, assumptions, and changed conditions.	Identifying cost savings approaches to deliver projects within existing resources.	Identifying cost savings and developing better cost data for operating and state of good repair needs.	Assessing overall financial capacity to deliver the program and maximizing existing revenue opportunities.
What tools and levers does the Board have?	Modifying planning assumptions and updating policies that guide plan implementation.	Finding project and program efficiencies, and the potential for scope changes, phasing projects, reconsidering some projects.	Adjusting service levels across modes of service, updating staffing and resource levels, and clarifying asset management needs.	Changing financial planning assumptions and considering potential revenue enhancements.

2026 lookahead

Scenario development process

- Responding to Board direction to develop and present plausible, affordable scenarios for an updated ST3 System Plan
- Creating scenarios that are built from different work stream elements, including policy/planning, capital delivery, transit operations, and finance
- Recognizing that certain opportunities will require additional analysis and/or be outside of the Board's direct authority

Scenario development

Rules & expectations

- **Ensure meaningful differences:** Scenarios should reveal real trade-offs and illustrate policy considerations for Board members
- **Focus on what matters:** Prioritize and vary components that truly move the needle
- **Keep it simple:** Complex scenarios collapse under their own weight; clarity is critical
- **Build on existing work:** Leverage cost-savings opportunities as the foundation; supplement with additional technical work
- **Expect a blended outcome:** The eventual ST3 System Plan update put forward to the Board is likely to combine elements from multiple scenarios

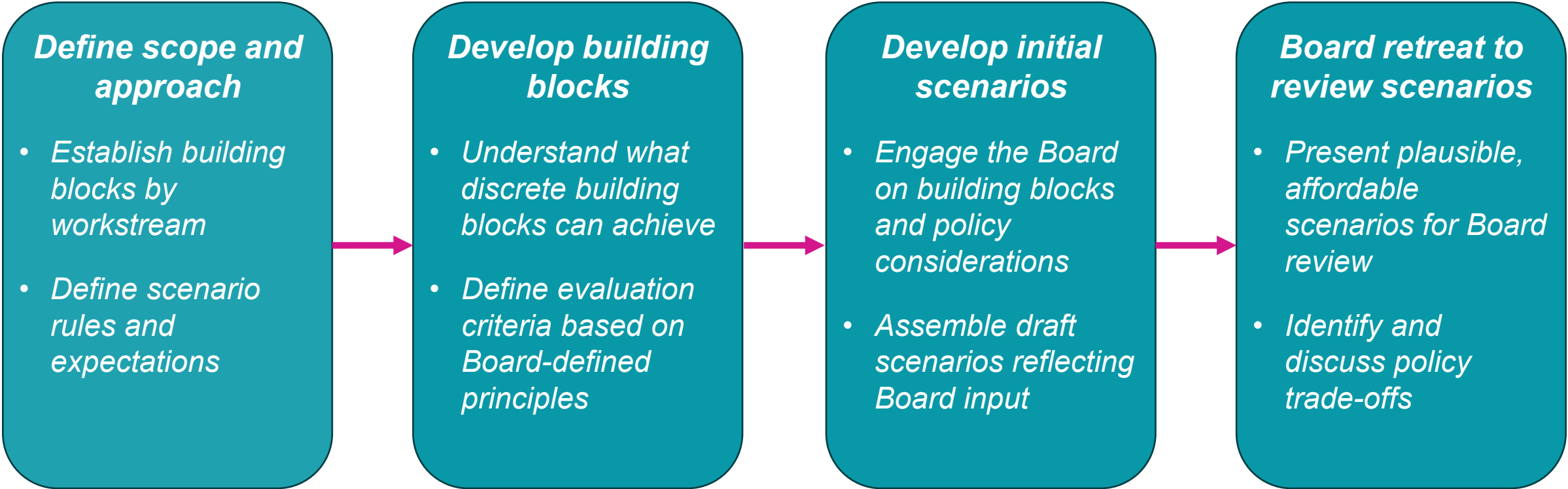
Scenario development process

Late 2025

January

February

March



System Expansion Projects in the City of Seattle

Capital delivery cost savings workplan

- Following the Board's directives from Motions Nos. M2024-59 & M2025-36
- **Programmatic opportunities** identified as opportunities across the portfolio of projects
- **Project opportunities** identified as unique opportunities for specific capital projects
- Opportunities will provide benefits to include improving passenger experience, lower O&M costs as well as cost savings

Pre-baselined projects
developing cost savings
opportunities

Conceptual engineering:

- **Ballard Link Extension**
- Tacoma Dome Link Extension
- Everett Link Extension
- **Infill Stations**
- Sounder Program
- OMF North

Post-preliminary engineering:

- OMF South
- **West Seattle Link Extension**



Link light rail

West Seattle Link Extension

■■■■ Elevated route

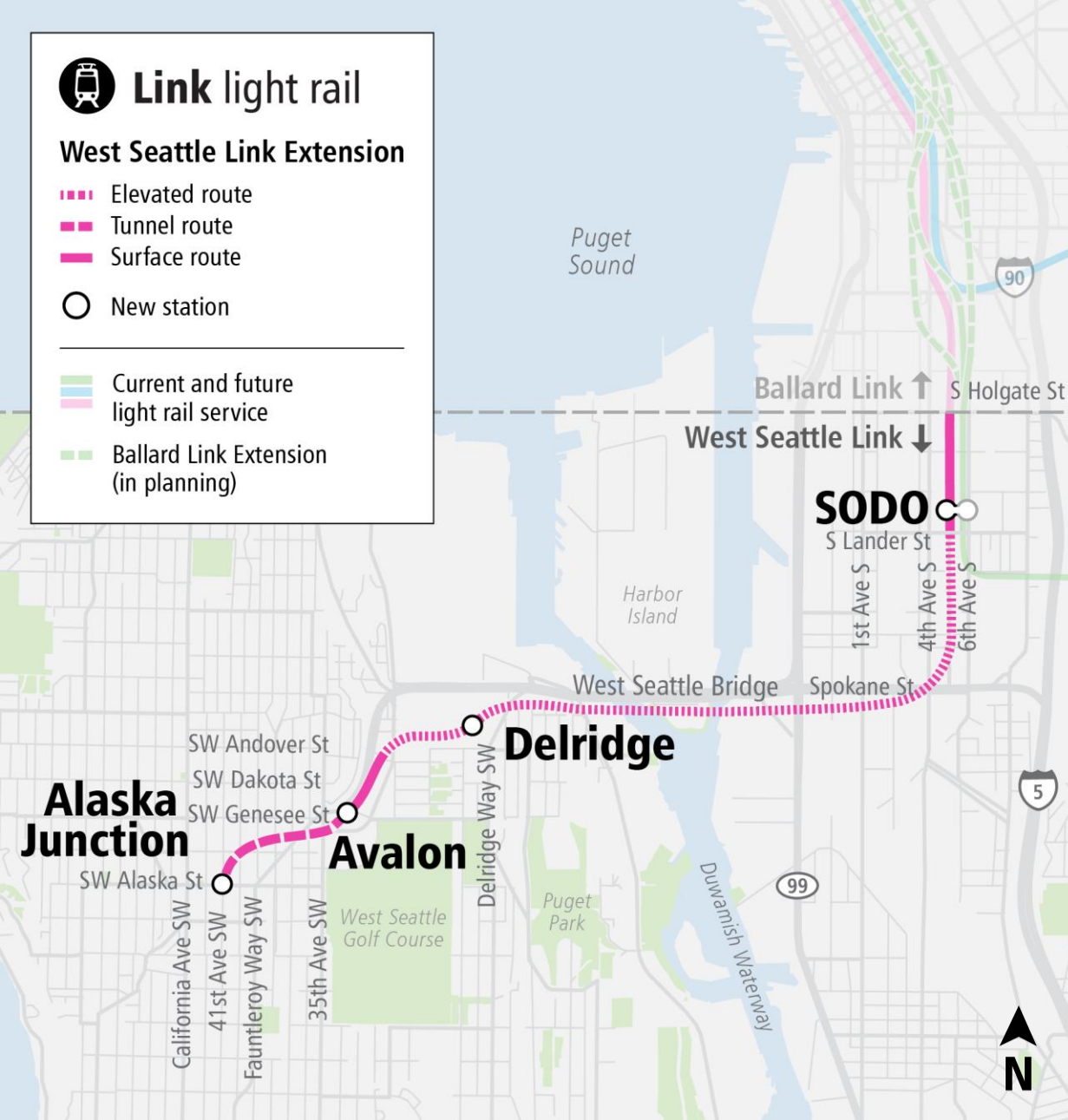
■■■ Tunnel route

— Surface route

○ New station

— Current and future light rail service

— Ballard Link Extension (in planning)



West Seattle Link Extension

- **Adds 4.1 miles** of light rail service and **4 new stations** with connections in SODO, Delridge, and West Seattle
- **Improves** transit service **frequency, reliability** and **capacity**
- **Reduces transit travel time** from Alaska Junction to Westlake Station by 50% once Ballard Link Extension is complete
- Record of Decision issued in April 2025; **currently in Design Phase**
- Working to integrate cost savings opportunities identified through **Cost Savings Workplan** to **reduce cost and community effects**



Ballard Link Extension

- **Adds 7.7 miles** of light rail service and **9 new stations** from Chinatown-International District to Ballard
- **New light rail-only tunnel** improves regional mobility by increasing connectivity and capacity through Downtown Seattle
- **Encourages equitable and sustainable urban growth** in station areas through transit-oriented development and multi-modal integration
- Publication of **Draft EIS anticipated this Spring**, followed by ST Board action to confirm/modify the preferred alternative
- Working to integrate cost savings opportunities identified through **Cost Savings Workplan to reduce cost and community effects**



Link light rail

Graham Street station area

Link 1 Line (in service)

Station platform

Existing light rail station



S Graham St Infill Station Project

- **New infill station** on the existing 1 Line between Columbia City and Othello stations
- Currently in **Preliminary Engineering**
- Working to advance multiple **cost savings opportunities**
- Forecasted Start of Service: **2031**

Thank you.



 *soundtransit.org*

