



West Seattle Link Extension

April 1 West Seattle Light Rail Forum follow-up information and FAQ

Since the community forum in April, several important decisions have advanced the West Seattle Link Extension project. On May 28, the Sound Transit Board adopted an updated Sound Transit 3 (ST3) System Plan that establishes a sustainable path forward for delivering the voter-approved ST3 program while addressing significant regional funding challenges. Under the updated plan, the West Seattle Link Extension (without Avalon Station) is fully funded through final design and construction.

Project updates reduce costs and community impacts

Over the past 18 months, work on the West Seattle Link Extension project has focused on identifying, evaluating, and implementing a range of measures to reduce the project cost, reduce community impacts, and maintain rider experience on the future Link line.

As part of this effort, Sound Transit identified more than \$2 billion in cost savings for the West Seattle Link Extension while maintaining light rail service to West Seattle. The most notable refinement is the removal of Avalon Station, which allows more of the alignment to be constructed in a tunnel, reducing both project costs and the number of properties needed for construction. The refined project includes stations in SODO, Delridge, and Alaska Junction. These refinements will be coordinated with the Federal Transit Administration as design continues.

What's next for the WSLE?

The project is now advancing through final design, with continued community engagement focused on station design, access improvements, public art, transit-oriented development, and construction planning. We are advancing property acquisition and relocation processes, preparing for early site preparation, and conducting geotechnical testing on Harbor Island to inform design of the future Duwamish River crossing. As we confirm the properties that need to be acquired, we will reach out directly to notify affected property owners, tenants, and businesses. We are committed to working closely with affected residents and businesses throughout the process to provide individualized support, relocation assistance, and benefits.

The following responses reflect the current project status and incorporate these recent updates.

What we heard from you

Thank you to all of the community members who provided feedback on what you wish to see near future West Seattle Link stations. We will continue to prioritize these community preferences wherever possible in our ongoing station design efforts, as well as in future transit-oriented development and station area planning.

Community members shared excitement about the opportunities that new light rail stations could bring to North Delridge and the Alaska Junction, especially the potential for more housing, local businesses, public spaces, and improved transit connections. A key theme was the desire to see transit-oriented development that supports existing communities, including more affordable housing, social housing, childcare, grocery options, restaurants, cafés, and other neighborhood-serving businesses. Many people expressed interest in creating welcoming gathering spaces, such as plazas, pedestrian-friendly streets, public art, and community spaces, that make the station areas feel like true destinations.



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We also heard a strong interest in making it easier and safer to get to and from the stations without a car. Community members emphasized the importance of reliable bus connections, short and convenient transfers, safe bike routes, accessible pedestrian crossings, bike storage, and station designs that work well for people of all ages and abilities. Many comments focused on ensuring stations are accessible, comfortable, and easy to navigate, including questions about elevators, stairs, lighting, bathrooms, safety, and maintenance.

Community members also shared questions and concerns about how construction and future development will affect existing residents, businesses, and neighborhoods. People asked about minimizing displacement, supporting local businesses, preserving community assets, maintaining access during construction, and ensuring opportunities for local businesses and artists to participate. We also heard interest in future expansion, including extending light rail farther south, and questions about how current design decisions preserve opportunities for future growth.

Project Timeline, Funding, and Decision-Making

What is the current timeline for West Seattle Link Extension? What needs to happen before construction can begin?

Working to reduce project cost was an important step toward Sound Transit establishing a financially sustainable path to delivering voter-approved projects in the ST3 Plan. While this work was important, it took time. This work resulted in more than \$2 billion in cost savings, reduced community impacts, and helped preserve the project's ability to move forward within the available financial resources. Following Board adoption of the updated ST3 plan in May, the WSLE project team is working to update the project schedule.

The project is now advancing through final design while beginning early work activities that support future construction, including utility relocation, property acquisition, and geotechnical testing for the future Duwamish River crossing. Sound Transit is currently confirming an updated project schedule as design progresses and the recent design refinements are coordinated with the Federal Transit Administration. Additional information about the construction schedule and major project milestones will be shared as it becomes available.

How is Sound Transit addressing affordability challenges while still advancing the project?

On May 28, the Sound Transit Board adopted an updated ST3 System Plan that establishes a financially sustainable path forward for delivering voter-approved transit expansion projects across the region. The plan addresses an estimated \$34.5 billion gap in the agency's long-term financial plan by prioritizing projects, phasing investments, and incorporating cost-saving measures while continuing to advance the ST3 program.

For the West Seattle Link Extension, extensive cost-saving analysis preserved the project's ability to move forward within available financial resources. As a result, the project is fully funded through design and construction under the updated System Plan and is advancing with final design. Sound Transit is now preparing for early site preparation, utility relocation, and property acquisition activities ahead of construction. The project team will continue looking for additional opportunities to reduce project cost and community impact while moving through final design.



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Avalon Station and Alignment Refinements

Why did Sound Transit remove Avalon Station from the West Seattle Link Extension?

Over the past 18 months, work on the West Seattle Link Extension project has focused on identifying, evaluating, and implementing a range of measures to reduce the project cost, reduce community impacts, and maintain rider experience on the future Link line.

The most notable change to the West Seattle Link Extension is the removal of Avalon Station. Eliminating Avalon Station reduces project costs and community impacts by optimizing the alignment, as well as reducing the number of properties needed to construct the project. In total, the project team identified over \$2 billion in cost savings with a refined alignment with stations at SODO, Delridge, and Alaska Junction. Many of these opportunities to lower the project cost and reduce community impacts were facilitated by the removal of the Avalon Station.

Based on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) No-Avalon Alternative, the total WSLE projected ridership would decrease by a net of 200 daily boardings compared to the Final EIS Preferred Alternative. The majority of projected riders at Avalon, including transfers from buses, would instead utilize Delridge or Alaska Junction.

How would changes to the project affect future expansion south to Morgan Junction, White Center, Burien, or other destinations?

The project refinements, including design changes to the Alaska Junction Station, still allow for future light rail expansion to the south.

Station Design and Access

How will station designs support easy, accessible transfers for people walking, biking, rolling, taking buses, or using mobility devices?

For passengers coming to the station by bus, taxi, rideshare, or drop-off, the transfer to light rail should be a simple and intuitive experience. Sound Transit and its agency partners prioritize walking, rolling, biking, and bus transfers over other vehicle modes. Design considerations may include enhancements to neighboring bus stops, drop-off areas, and Paratransit, as well as potential features such as slow streets, transit-only streets, and mobility hubs.

The latest [Station Planning Progress Report](#) published in June 2025 captures our latest thinking about how pedestrians, transit riders, cyclists, and others will access the stations and how the stations might fit within each neighborhood. Ideas in this report came from the feedback we received at neighborhood forums and community briefings in 2019 and 2020 in addition to further community engagement sessions in 2023 and 2024 focused on detailed station planning and design. We will continue to refine and update station concepts as we advance the project design and solicit feedback and ideas from the community.



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Bus and Transit Connectivity

How will Sound Transit and King County Metro improve bus connections so people across West Seattle communities can reach the new stations?

Sound Transit and King County Metro work closely together to plan an integrated transit system that makes it easy for people to connect between bus and light rail. As the West Seattle Link Extension advances, the agencies will continue coordinating on bus routes, station access, and transit connections to improve mobility for communities throughout West Seattle.

King County Metro's long-range Metro Connects plan envisions restructuring bus service as new Link extensions open, improving connections to light rail while expanding transit coverage and frequency in West Seattle. Until the Ballard Link Extension opens, some routes, such as the RapidRide H Line, are expected to continue providing direct service to downtown so riders do not need to make multiple transfers. Before any future service changes are implemented, King County Metro will conduct a public planning and outreach process. As final design progresses, Sound Transit, King County Metro, and the City of Seattle will continue refining station-area transit integration to provide convenient, reliable connections for riders.

Construction and Community Impacts

How will Sound Transit manage construction impacts on residents, businesses, streets, sidewalks, bike routes, and transit service?

Major construction can be disruptive to neighborhood businesses and residents. Sound Transit is committed to being a good neighbor during construction projects and members of our project's engagement team will be dedicated points of contact for each neighborhood along the project area. We will update the community with changes to work sites or schedules, as well as temporary closures or redirection of roads, parking, and any other public facilities. Subscribe to project updates on the [project webpage](#).

In addition, contractors will follow important guidelines when working in your neighborhood. They will:

1. Maintain a safe and secure worksite.
2. Keep the site and the immediately surrounding area clean.
3. Maintain access to nearby homes and businesses.
4. Minimize noise and lighting impacts.
5. Minimize parking impacts from construction equipment and employee vehicles.

Housing, Businesses, and Station-Area Development

How will the project reduce displacement and support housing affordability, small businesses, and existing community members?

Adding light rail service to West Seattle creates opportunities for communities to benefit from new connections, including improved access to jobs, education, shopping, and other destinations. New stations can also support additional housing (including affordable housing), new businesses, public spaces, and other community-serving uses when coordinated with local planning efforts.



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Sound Transit recognizes that major transportation investments can also contribute to changes in neighborhoods and increased development pressures. The West Seattle Link Extension Final EIS evaluated potential cumulative effects related to growth, development, and displacement, and identified the importance of coordination with local jurisdictions and community partners to support equitable outcomes. Sound Transit works with cities, community organizations, and public and private partners to plan for transit-oriented development on property acquired for project construction that is not needed for permanent transit operations. These efforts prioritize affordable housing and other uses that provide community benefits. You can learn more about our [transit-oriented development program](#).

As the project advances, Sound Transit will continue working with community partners to support current and future residents, businesses, and neighborhoods while connecting West Seattle communities to the regional light rail system.

How will Sound Transit coordinate with the City of Seattle on zoning, station-area planning, transit-oriented development, public space, and community-serving uses?

Sound Transit is responsible for station design, while the City of Seattle is responsible for shaping the “station area”—the neighborhood around the station. Sound Transit and the City may partner on improvements within the “station context” — typically two or three blocks from the station itself. In addition to the City of Seattle, we also partner with King County Metro to ensure integration with future service plans, and coordinate with the Port of Seattle at specific stations that intersect with Port facilities and interests.

Find out more about the [City of Seattle’s West Seattle Junction station area planning](#), [City of Seattle’s Transportation Plan](#), the [Seattle Comprehensive Plan](#), and the [King County Long-Range Plan](#), which affect future plans for station areas.

Environment and Neighborhood Resources

How is Sound Transit protecting natural areas along the alignment, including Longfellow Creek, the Duwamish Greenbelt, and other environmental resources?

Sound Transit completed a comprehensive environmental review for the West Seattle Link Extension that identified sensitive resources such as Longfellow Creek, the Duwamish Greenbelt, wetlands, streams, wildlife habitat, and the Duwamish Waterway. The project has been designed to avoid and minimize project effects where possible by refining the alignment, limiting the project footprint, and complying with federal, state, and local environmental regulations. During construction, contractors will implement measures to control erosion and sediment, protect water quality, manage stormwater, reduce noise and vibration, and inhibit impacts to nearby streams, wetlands, and habitat.

Where project effects cannot be avoided, Sound Transit will restore disturbed areas and provide mitigation consistent with permitting requirements. This includes restoring native vegetation, replacing affected wetlands or habitat, monitoring environmental performance during construction, and coordinating closely with regulatory agencies. These measures are intended to help protect important natural areas while delivering the project.



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Community Engagement

How can community members stay informed, provide input, and understand how their feedback continues to shape project decisions?

Sound Transit staff are available to meet and provide direct updates or answer questions via phone call, video call, or email. Community members can email the project at WestSeattleLink@soundtransit.org, call the project at (206) 903-7229, or sign up for email updates [here](#). We are committed to keeping you engaged in this large-scale infrastructure project within your communities.