



West Seattle Link Extension

West Seattle Light Rail Visioning Forum: Questions & Responses

Property Acquisition and Maintenance

How does Sound Transit maintain properties that have been acquired early and are currently vacant?

Sound Transit contracts with landscaping services to maintain the properties while they are vacant. When we acquire properties, we secure the site and buildings while working to maintain the appearance of occupation. Neighbors can always call with concerns about specific properties in their neighborhood.

How will Sound Transit support businesses whose properties are acquired for the West Seattle Link Extension?

If a business is located on property that is needed to be acquired for the project, they will be supported by a Real Properties relocation agent who will work closely with them throughout the acquisition and relocation process. Real Properties' goal is to identify a replacement property that provides similar value and functionality to the previous property. The relocation agent will help businesses understand their rights and benefits, including reimbursement for eligible moving and reestablishment expenses. You can learn more about the acquisition and relocation process in our [Residential Relocation](#) and [Non-Residential Relocation](#) Handbooks.

If I believe my property may be acquired, how can I learn about the next steps?

Sound Transit recognizes the toll that this process has on people who own, live, or work in properties anticipated to be acquired by light rail construction. WSLE and agency staff are available to meet or provide information via phone/email to anyone concerned about their property, home, or business and how it relates to the WSLE project. You can learn more about the acquisition and relocation process in our [Residential Relocation](#) and [Non-Residential Relocation](#) Handbooks.

Avalon Station

How would the No-Avalon alignment impact projected ridership?

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 vast majority of projected riders at Avalon, including transfers from buses, would instead utilize Delridge or Alaska Junction.

Would eliminating Avalon Station now prevent adding it back in the future?

The No-Avalon optimized tunnel alignment would preclude adding Avalon Station back in the future.

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Is Sound Transit eliminating Avalon Station?

The board-selected alternative outlined in the EIS includes a tunnel between the Avalon and Alaska Junction stations. What the project team is evaluating now is whether eliminating the Avalon Station and extending the tunneled portion of the project further east is a viable option to reduce overall project costs. As we assess these potential design changes, we are committed to building a project that meets the needs of the community and prioritizes passenger experience.

When will a final decision be made about whether Avalon Station will be built?

Sound Transit is evaluating a range of cost-saving opportunities specific to the West Seattle Link Extension, including the number and design of stations, innovative construction methods, and other opportunities to improve affordability while maintaining project benefits. This work may affect elements of the project's scope and timeline as the project team assesses what is technically feasible and financially responsible. The Sound Transit Board of Directors is expected to vote on an updated ST3 System Plan in mid-2026. This Board action will inform the next steps for the project schedule and scope, including potential elimination of the Avalon Station.

WSLE Construction and Design

Will the West Seattle light rail tunnel be built using a mined tunnel or cut-and-cover construction?

The revised West Seattle light rail tunnel would be constructed with a tunnel boring machine, meaning it is built underground with limited surface disturbance outside of the areas around the tunnel portal and stations. The Alaska Junction Station would be constructed using a cut and cover method.

If the Minimum Operable Segment (MOS) is built between SODO and Delridge, could the line be extended to Alaska Junction later?

The Delridge MOS could potentially be designed to connect to Avalon Station or a no-Avalon alignment in the future.

If the Board advances the Minimum Operable Segment (MOS), when would the segment from Delridge to Alaska Junction be built?

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What will the light-rail bridge over the Duwamish be made out of?

The Duwamish River crossing will be a post-tensioned concrete bridge with steel cable stays.

Link Light Rail trains feel small compared to other cities' train systems. Why can't they hold more passengers?

Sound Transit uses standard size light rail passenger cars; the same type of rail vehicles used in many North American light rail systems. When coupled into 3- or 4-car trains, they can carry roughly 600 to 800 passengers at a time. Light rail vehicles are smaller and lighter than heavy rail (subway-style) trains, because they're designed to operate in a mix of environments, including at-grade crossings with traffic. That lighter design does limit overall train size, weight, and capacity, but it also allows the system to run safely in city streets and tighter corridors while still moving a large number of people efficiently.

Bus and Transit Connectivity

How will the opening of WSLE affect bus service in West Seattle?

Until the Ballard Link Extension (BLE) opens, King County Metro will continue to run buses between West Seattle and downtown, giving passengers additional options for their trip. After BLE opens, the current assumption in Metro Connects, Metro's long-range plan, would be to send the H Line to Admiral and Alki instead of downtown.

Sound Transit and King County Metro will continue to work closely together to improve transit accessibility throughout the region and ensure that bus and light rail are integrated into an effective and accessible system. As new Link stations come online, Sound Transit and King County Metro will continue to examine how existing bus services can be modified to improve transit connectivity.

Will the new light rail bridge over the Duwamish River have pedestrian or bike facilities?

The bridge over the Duwamish River for the West Seattle Link Extension will be a light rail-only structure. It is designed specifically to carry trains and will not include lanes or paths for cars, bicycles, or pedestrians.

SODO Neighborhood Impacts

What will happen to the SODO busway during and after construction?

Buses would be permanently relocated from the SODO busway onto other area streets to accommodate the guideway and tracks for the West Seattle Link and Ballard Link Extensions.

Where are shoofly tracks proposed to be located?

The design team is looking at various shoofly (temporary bypass) track locations as they identify opportunities to reduce cost and community impacts. Appendix J of the WSLE Final EIS included design drawings showing the location of a shoofly track east of the busway. Recent staff presentations to the Sound Transit Board have also displayed conceptual

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designs for shoofly tracks constructed in the SODO Busway to the west of the existing SODO Station.

Delridge Neighborhood Impacts

Will the West Seattle Health Club be impacted by WSLE?

Many community members have shared with Sound Transit that the West Seattle Health Club plays an important role in the neighborhood's social fabric. The WSLE project team is currently looking at multiple ways to reduce property and community impacts in the vicinity of the WSHC. As design work progresses and potential design refinements are validated, we will have a better understanding whether the West Seattle Health Club can be maintained in its current location.

Has the WSLE team been in contact with NUCOR in Delridge?

Yes, project staff regularly communicate with NUCOR. NUCOR would not be displaced by any of the EIS alternatives, including the board-selected alternative. Given the importance of NUCOR steel to the regional economy and historic presence of NUCOR in West Seattle, it would not be feasible to displace NUCOR Steel to build light rail facilities in its place.

ST3 Cost, Configuration, and Funding

How will Sound Transit manage the growing costs of building light rail?

- **What is the plan for Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel (DSTT) renovation and OMF North timing?**
- **Is Sound Transit considering reconfiguring the ST3 program or delaying WSLE?**
- **Will there be an additional ballot measure to address changes to ST3?**

In 2025, Sound Transit launched the Enterprise Initiative, a comprehensive effort aimed at delivering the maximum benefits of ST3 within available financial resources. This work includes project-level strategies (such as optimizing Link station designs) and programmatic ones that could support and benefit the entire portfolio of projects (such as creating efficiencies that reduce procurement timelines). Given the scale of the cost pressures on Sound Transit's capital program, staff and Board members will also need to look at scope and schedule changes and project phasing scenarios.

The Sound Transit Board of Directors are expected to make decisions mid-2026 regarding the Enterprise Initiative, informing projects' scope and delivery timelines. More information about the Enterprise Initiative is available [here](#).

Why will WSLE temporarily terminate at SODO?

The Ballard Link Extension (BLE) project will include the construction of a new light rail-only tunnel through downtown Seattle, increasing the capacity for light rail vehicles locally and throughout the regional light rail system. Until the completion of the BLE project, WSLE (3

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Line) trains will terminate in SODO, and riders will need to transfer to the 1 Line to access the rest of the Link system. Once the BLE is in service, 3 Line trains from West Seattle will interline into the existing system, traveling through the current DSTT and terminating in Everett.

Is there any way to open WSLE before 2032?

We are constantly striving to advance the project as quickly as possible; however, it is not possible to accelerate the final design and construction schedule to allow for an opening before 2032.

Is WSLE expected to qualify for federal funding?

The West Seattle Link Extension team is coordinating with the Federal Transit Administration and is planning to seek Federal Funding for the Project. [Chapter 3 of the Final EIS](#) provides detailed estimated ridership for WSLE.

Community Engagement

How can community members contact the West Seattle Link Extension team?

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](#). Sound Transit recognizes that, while the ballot measure that created the ST3 portfolio has passed and that the formal comment periods within the EIS process have passed, community members care deeply about the future of West Seattle, and we are committed to keeping community members informed.