

WSLE & BLE Project Quarterly Update

Seattle Design Commission

9/18/2025

Agenda

ST3 Program Update

- Cost Saving Workplan

West Seattle Link Extension

- Overview
- Opportunities

Ballard Link Extension

- Schedule Update

Cost Saving Workplan

- **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.

Projects Developing Cost Savings Opportunities

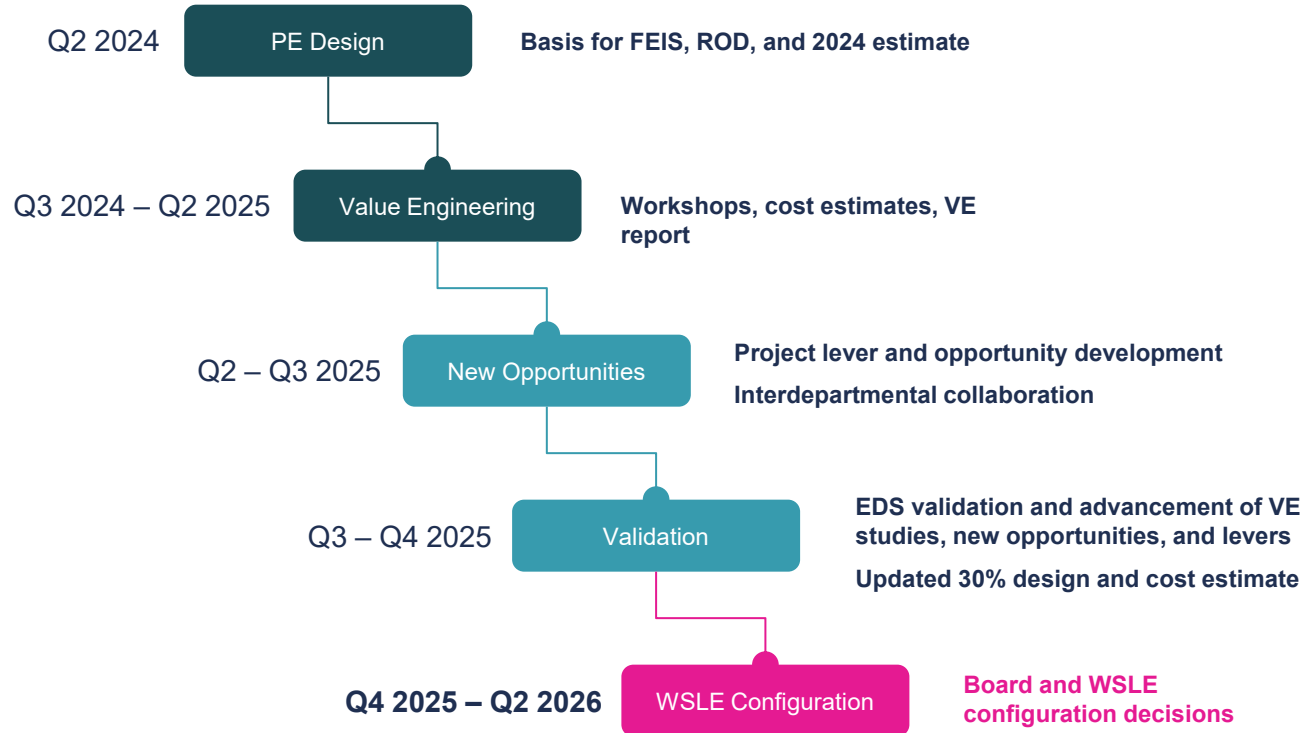
Conceptual Engineering:

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

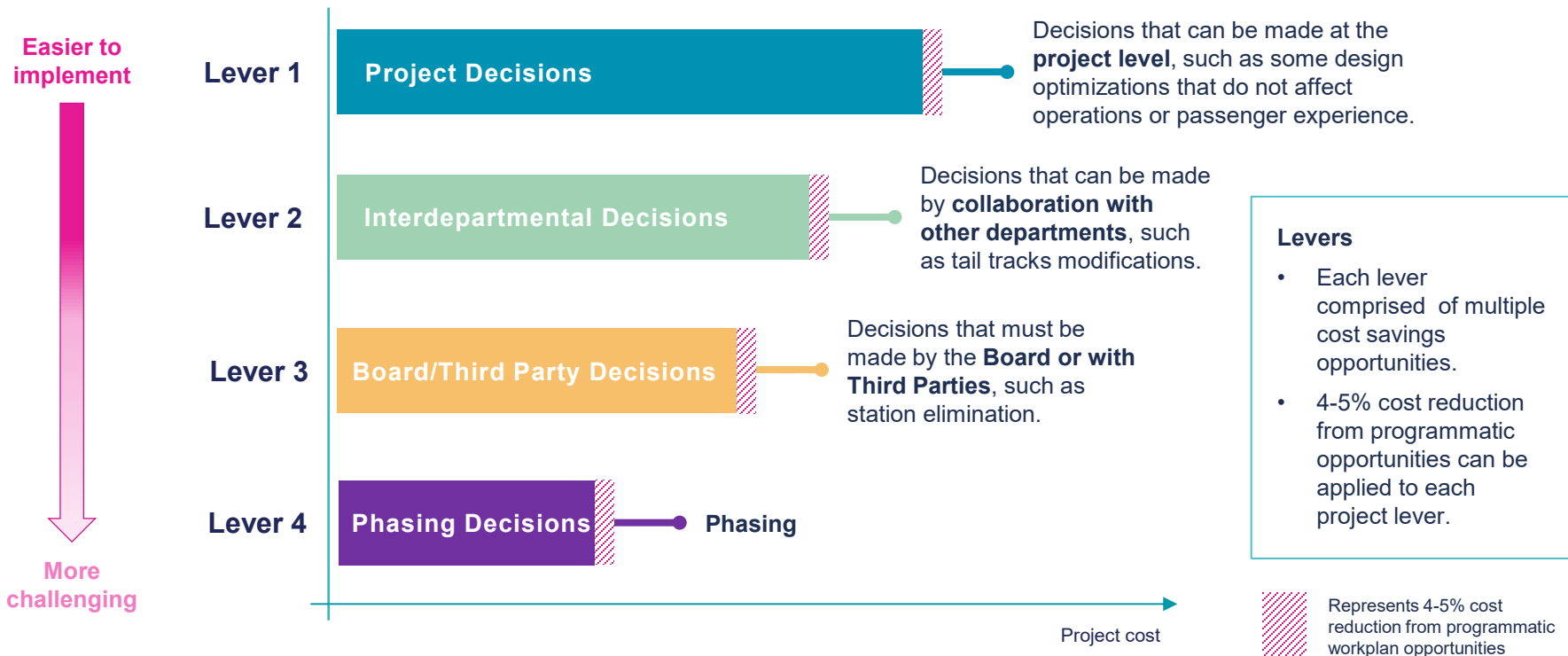
Post-Preliminary Engineering:

- STRIDE Bus Rapid Transit
- OMF South
- **West Seattle Link Extension**

WSLE Cost Saving Process



Cost Saving Levers



West Seattle Link Extension



Link light rail

West Seattle Link Extension

■ Elevated route

■ Tunnel route

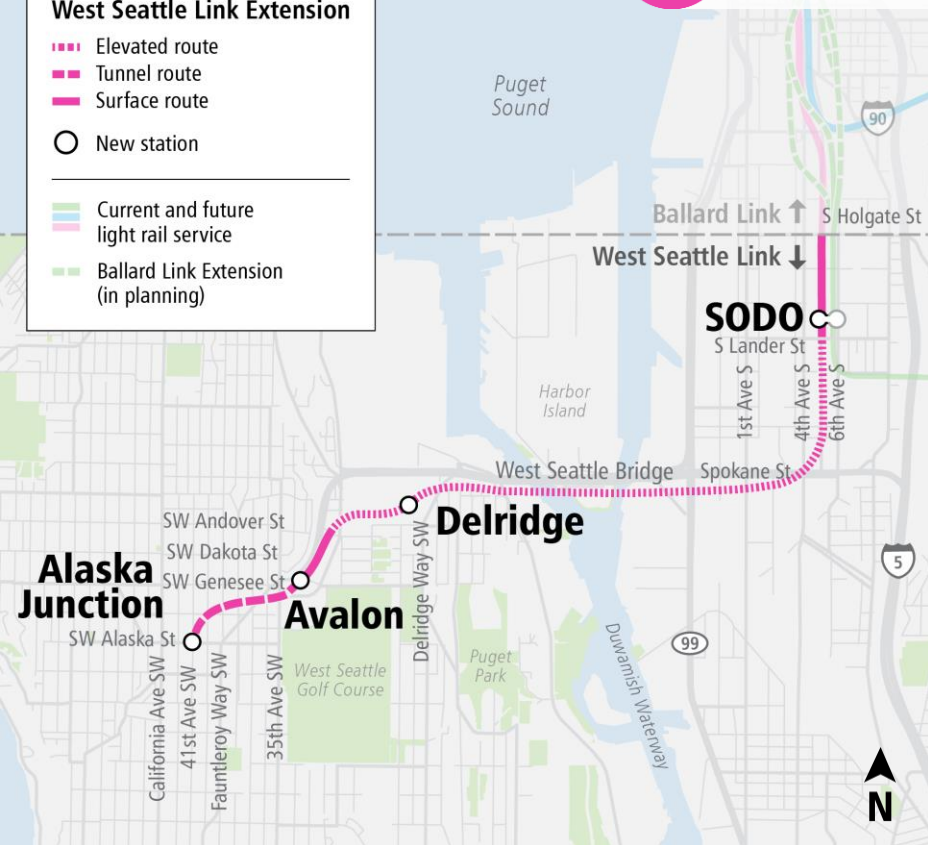
■ Surface route

○ New station

■ Current and future light rail service

■ Ballard Link Extension (in planning)

3 Line

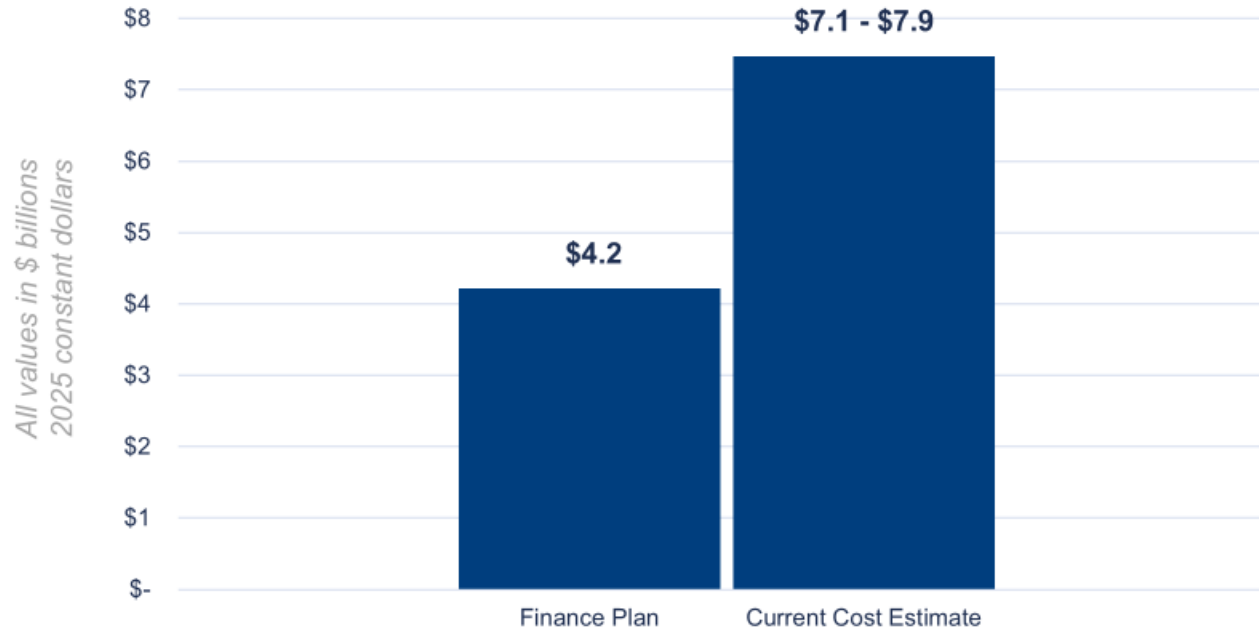


West Seattle Link Extension

- **Adds 4.1 miles** of light rail service and **4 stations** with connections in SODO, Delridge, and West Seattle.
- **Reduces transit travel** time from Alaska Junction to Westlake Station by 50% once Ballard Link Extension is complete.
- **Improves** transit service **frequency, reliability** and **capacity**.
- Facilitates redevelopment near stations, with focus on **affordable housing**.
- **Provides travel alternative** if West Seattle Bridge is congested or closed for repairs.
- **Facilitates future expansion** to south.

2021 Financial Plan vs. Current Cost Estimate (2025\$) Comparison

Drivers of Cost Growth

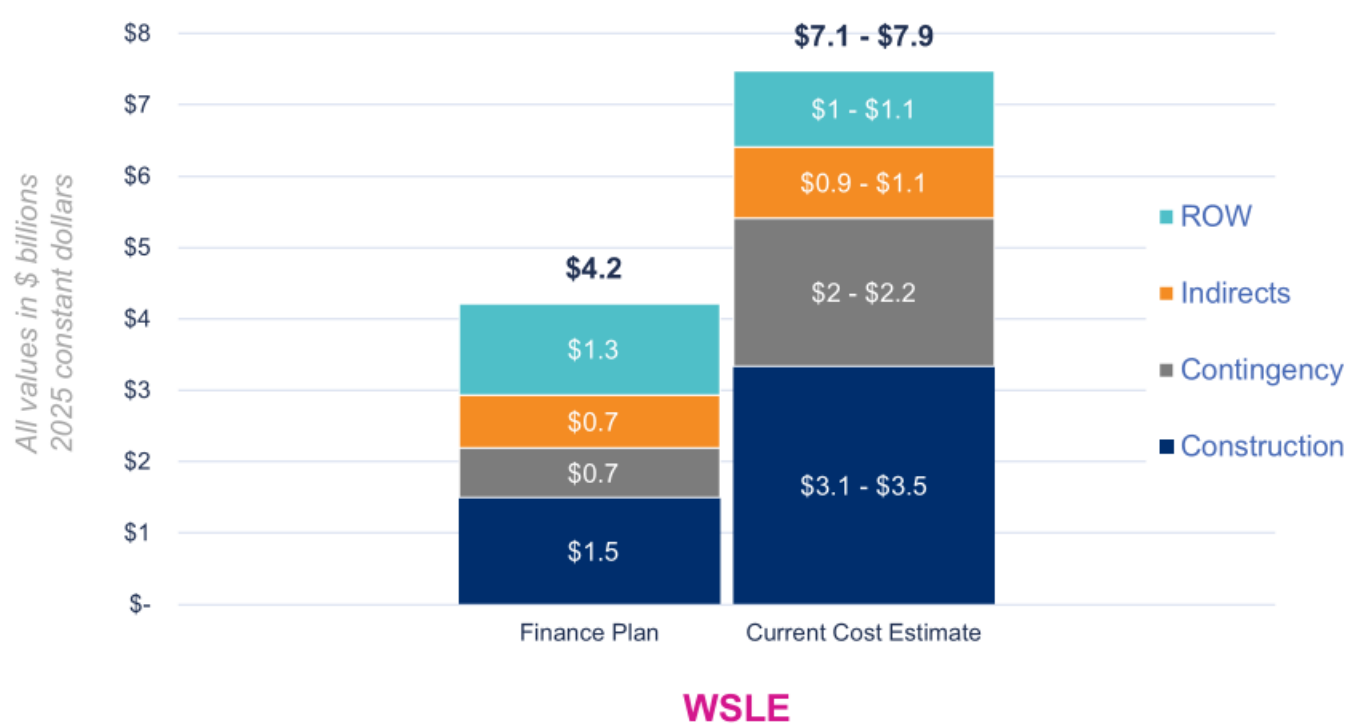


WSLE

- Bottom up **cost estimating** used for current estimate.
- No cost savings levers applied to the ranges on this slide.
- Total contingency for the current cost estimates includes construction design allowance and change order contingency, ROW contingency, and professional services contingency.
- **All numbers shown are in 2025 \$**

2021 Financial Plan vs. Current Cost Estimate (2025\$) Comparison

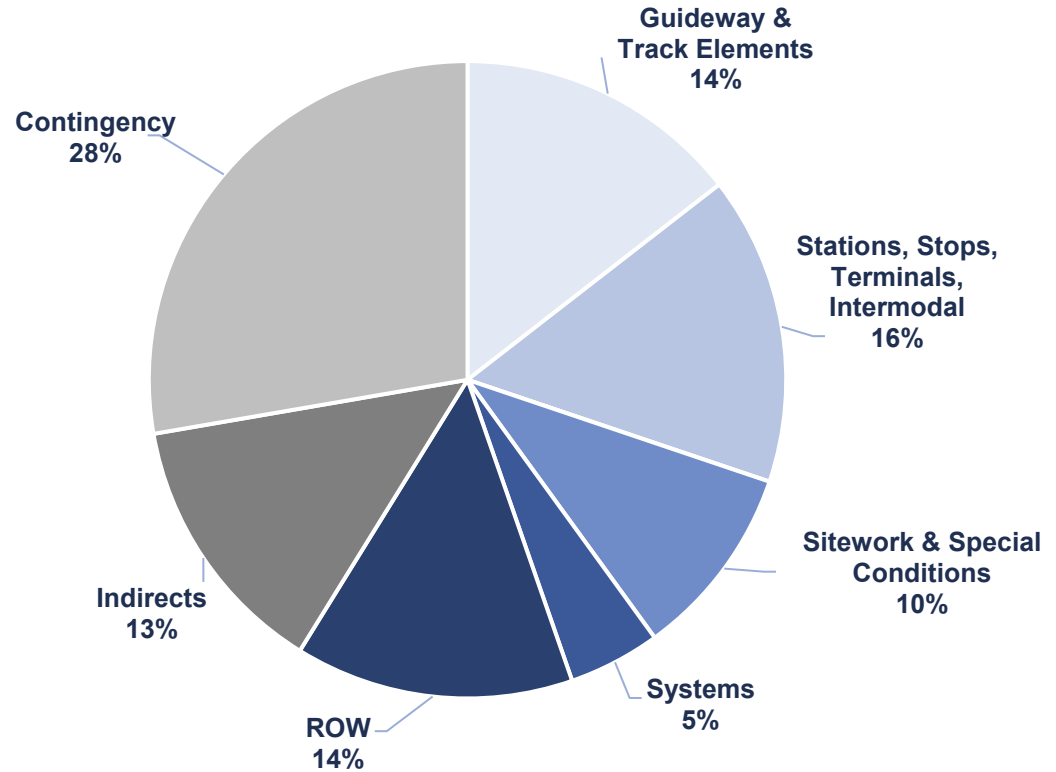
Drivers of Cost Growth



- Construction increases reflect current market conditions
- Contingency allocation aligned with FTA Oversight Procedure 40
- Indirects will be carried as a percentage of hard costs (dependent on project complexity and durations)
- ROW costs have contingency removed, reallocated to Contingency bucket
- **All numbers shown are in 2025 \$**
- No Cost Savings reflected

Cost Drivers: WSLE

- 4.1 miles of **aerial, at-grade and tunnel guideway** and **1 at-grade, 1 elevated, and 2 tunnel stations**
 - > One Link transfer Station (SODO)
- High-level fixed Bridge over Duwamish
- Connection to OMF-C
- Tunnel stations in West Seattle Junction
- ROW costs reflect location in high-density urban corridor



WSLE: Current Levers (2025\$)

Easier to implement



More challenging

Total Project Cost

4.1 miles, 4 stations

\$7.1B – 7.9B

Lever 1

4.1 miles, 4 stations

\$6.9B – 7.1B

5% - 6%
Reduction

Lever 2

4.1 miles, 4 stations

\$6.8B - 6.9B

8% - 11%
Reduction

Lever 3

4.1 miles, 3 stations

\$6.2B - 6.5B

13% - 17%
Reduction

Lever 4: Phasing

2.9 miles, 2 stations

\$3.3B - 3.4B

53% - 54%
Reduction

Finance Plan \$4.2B

Project/CDD
Interdepartmental
Board/Third Party

*EDS (design team) Phase 1 focused on validating estimates as well as incorporating cost saving opportunities into final design

All costs shown in 2025 \$

SODO Station and Foundation Optimization

Benefits

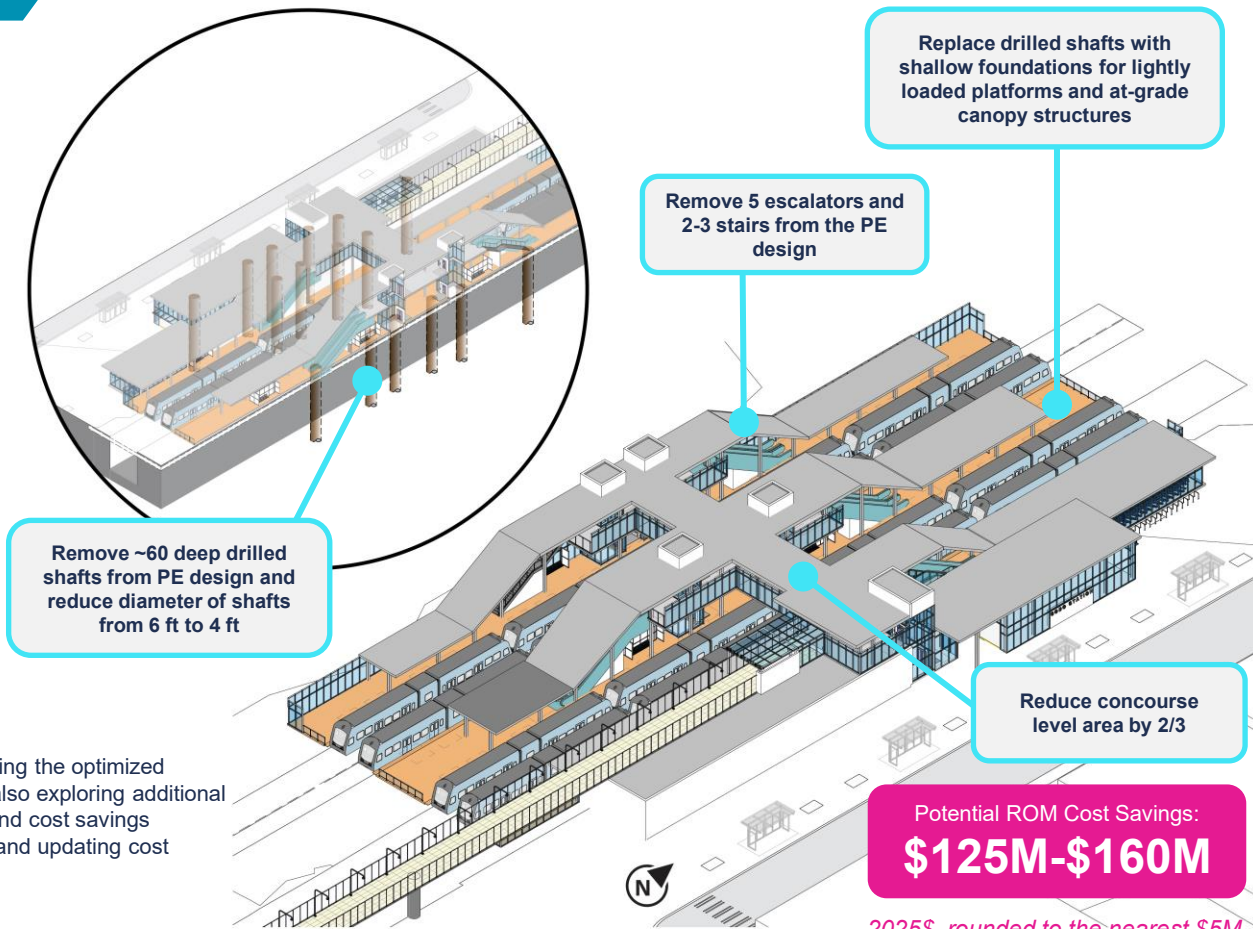
- **Reduces cost.**
- **Reduces station footprint**, platform widths, vertical transportation elements, and concourse-level area.
- **Maintains passenger experience.**
- Reduces the required number and diameter of deep shaft foundations.
- Allows for more efficient west shoofly track arrangement.
- **No noticeable impact on ridership or TOD.**

Considerations

- Passenger experience and safety
- Construction safety

EDS Phase 1

- EDS is validating the optimized design while also exploring additional optimization and cost savings opportunities and updating cost estimates.



Aerial Guideway and Foundation Optimization

Benefits

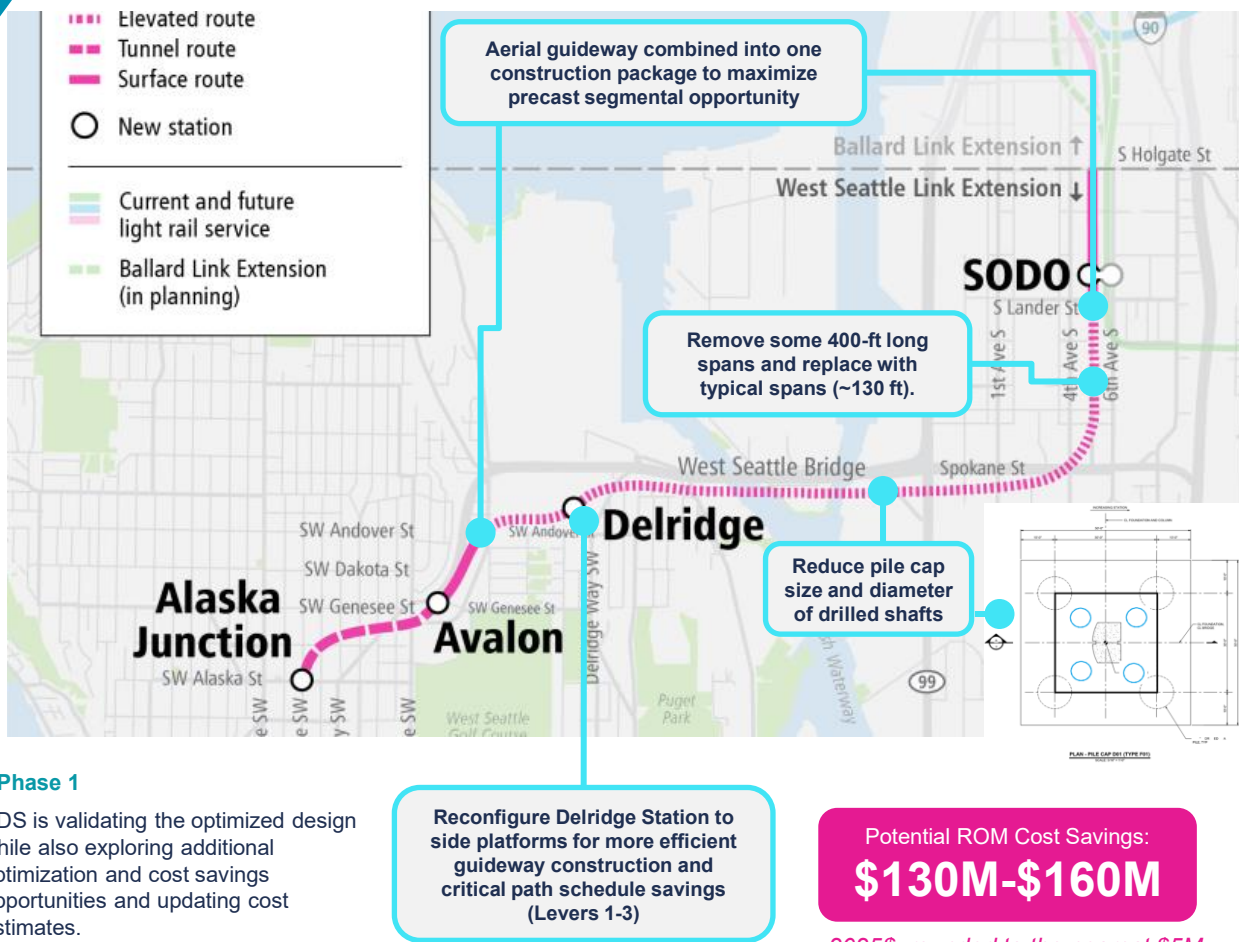
- **Reduces costs and SODO-area environmental impacts** by removing ground improvements.
- **Reduces costs and environmental impacts** by reducing pile cap and shaft size.
- Provides further pile length cost-saving optimization opportunities.
- Fabricates precast segments **offsite and off the critical path**.
- **Improved safety and quality** through modular construction and standardization.

Considerations

- Additional field investigations and seismic studies required.
- Additional off-site ROW and investment may be required for a precast yard.
- Maximum benefits realized by combining opportunities: foundation optimization, Delridge side platforms, and Duwamish Crossing precast segmental construction.

EDS Phase 1

- EDS is validating the optimized design while also exploring additional optimization and cost savings opportunities and updating cost estimates.



West Shoofly

East Shoofly

SODO Station West
Shoofly

New temporary track configuration allows trains to keep moving while the station and permanent track are under construction.

Benefits

- Maintains 1-Line service throughout construction.
- Minimizes service and passenger experience disruptions.
- Reduces the need for temporary shoofly facilities as opposed to PE design.
- Reduces property acquisition requirements.

Considerations

- Property savings assume the pocket track for the new BLE project can be eliminated.
- Service shutdowns and schedule cutovers for the shoofly would be carried out across long weekends to minimize disruptions.
- Internal and City of Seattle approval needed at Lander Street and Holgate Street crossings.
- Requires ST operations collaboration.
- Potential travel alternatives during station shutdown.

Spine segmentation contained in E3 busway; additional property acquisition not required assuming new BLE pocket track can be eliminated

West shoofly constructed on permanent 3 line tracks

West shoofly eliminates 1/3 mile of temporary tracks from the PE Design



East Shoofly

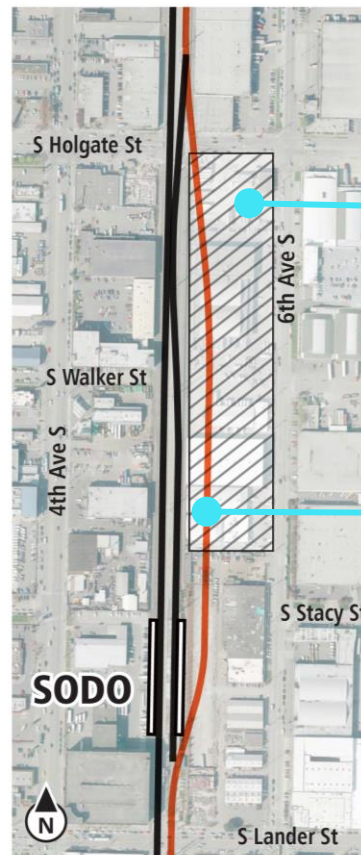
Additional property acquisition required for temporary tracks

Temporary tracks for east shoofly from preliminary design.

*Cost savings result from ROW and not from construction costs

Potential ROM Cost Savings:
\$115M-\$140M

2025\$, rounded to the nearest \$5M



Alaska Junction Station Optimization

Benefits

- **Eliminates construction and minimizes ROW costs** on 41st Ave SW, south of SW Edmunds.
- **Reduces maintenance needs** by relocating remote fan plant and TPSS into station headhouse.
- **Reduces truck traffic** in the West Seattle area during construction.
- **Minimizes excavation** at crossover
- Improved terminal processing time potentially **saves ~3 minutes**, to be confirmed by rail simulation scenarios.

Considerations

- Passenger experience accessing transit and junction needs further study.
- Maintenance requirements for TPSS and tunnel ventilation system in the station headhouses need more assessment.
- EDS will investigate how to reduce potential TOD impacts by avoiding south headhouse encumbrances.

Eliminates tail tracks
Moves the crossover to the north of the platform
Reduces crossover from a Number 10 to a Number 8 to shorten the crossover cavern length.



EDS Phase 1

- EDS is validating the optimized design while also exploring additional optimization and cost savings opportunities and updating cost estimates.

Potential ROM Cost Savings:

\$190M-\$235M

2025\$, rounded to the nearest \$5M

Avalon Station Elimination

Benefits

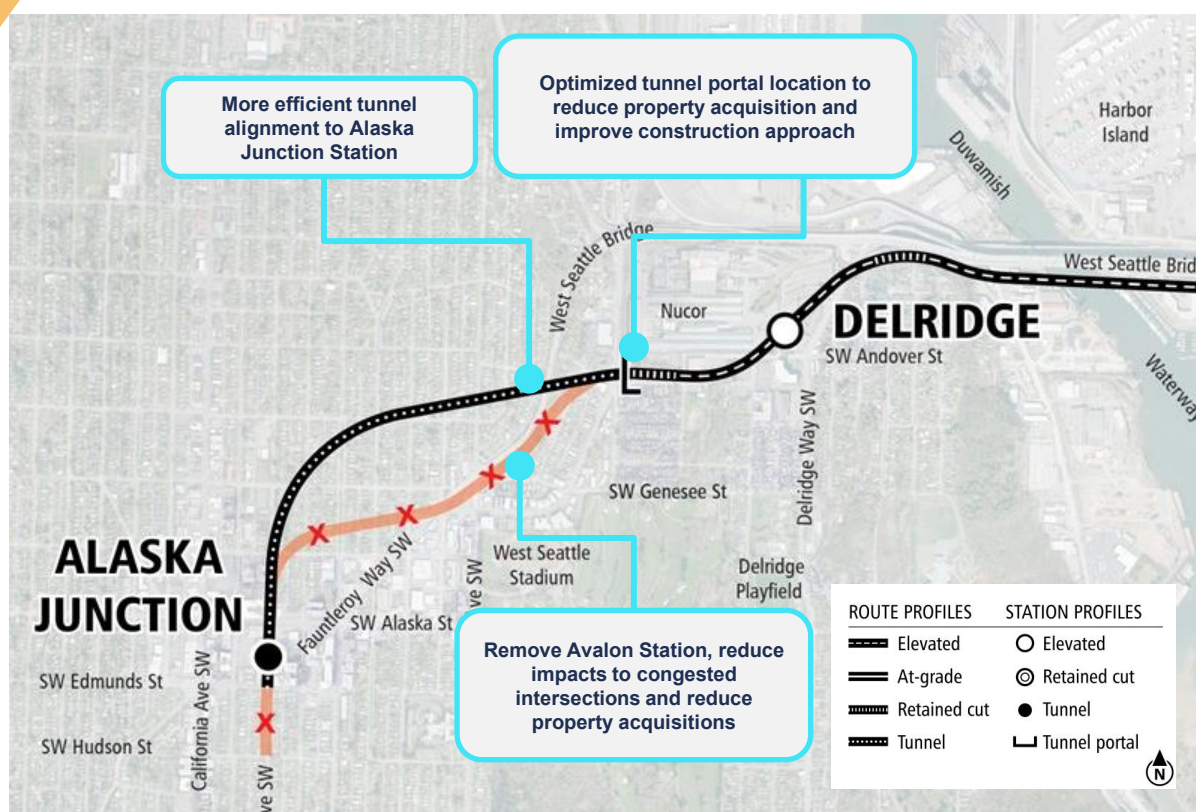
- **Included in FEIS**
- **Cost and schedule savings**
- **Allows more direct alignment** between Delridge Station and Alaska Junction Station
- **Minimizes disruption** to areas of concern for the City of Seattle and property owners/residents
- Opportunity to shift tunnel portal construction eastward
- **No notable impact on ridership** from full build

Considerations

- Removes TOD opportunities.
- Requires Board action and City of Seattle coordination.

EDS Phase 1

- Confirm guideway alignment from Delridge Station to new portal location to potentially reduce impacts to Longfellow Creek and Health Club property.
- Confirm portal location and modified alignment to Alaska Junction Station.
- Update cost estimates.



Potential ROM Cost Savings:

\$375M-\$470M

2025\$, rounded to the nearest \$5M

WSLE Alignment: Phasing

Delridge MOS (in FEIS)

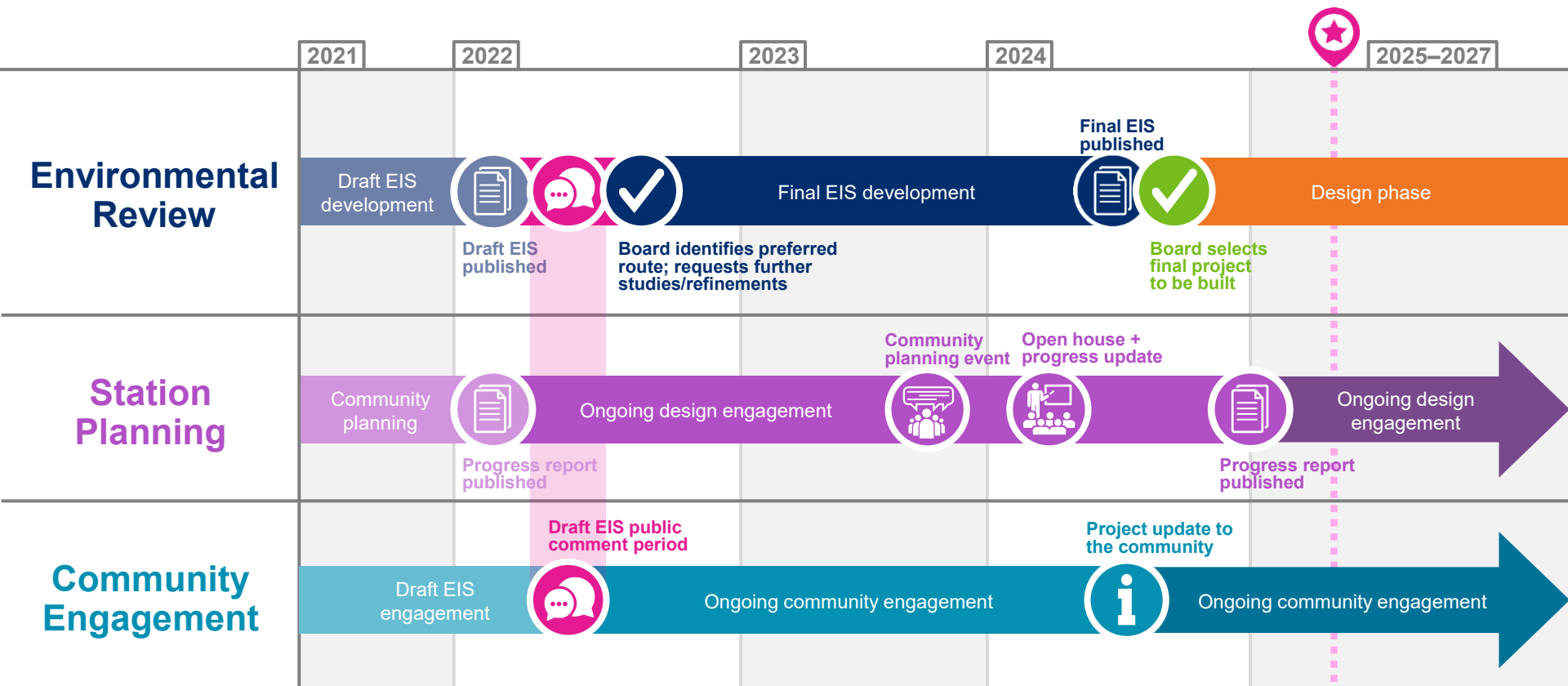
- Starts just north of SODO Station and extends to 500 ft south of Delridge Station
- Does not provide pocket track or Hi-Rail access
- Connection to OMF Central and SODO configuration undergoing operational modeling and service simulation.
- Provides transit integration to the south (White Center and Burien)
- Requires additional bus stops and layovers spaces at Delridge Station
- Ridership: 17k daily trips on project (24k-27k for full build)



Strategic Next Steps for WSLE

- ✓ **Strategic approach to final design** will allow the project team to reduce costs while giving the Board maximum flexibility
- ✓ **Utilizing Board-approved allocated budgets** allows the project team to minimize cost and schedule delays while providing off-ramps
- ✓ **Staying on schedule** alleviates cost growth due to inflation and market conditions

WSLE Community Engagement Schedule



Ballard Link Extension

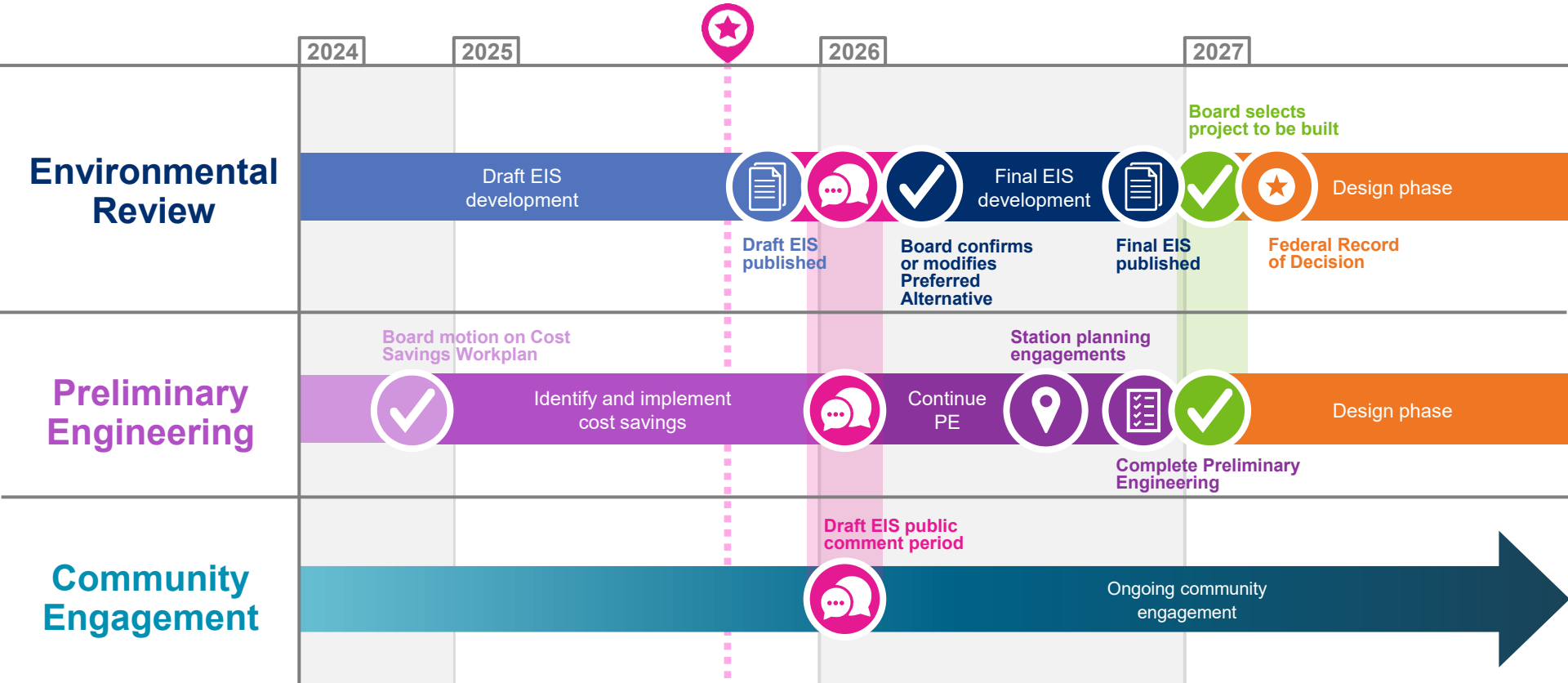


Ballard

Link Extension Status

DEIS publication	Q4 2025*
Modify/confirm PA	Q1 2026*
Final EIS	Q1 2026 – Q1 2027*
ROD/Project to be built	Q1 2027*
Advancing work plan: Opportunities for cost reductions	Board update Q4 2025*
Additional activities:	
• PE complete (30% design)	Q4 2026*
• Civil design procurement complete	Q1 2027*
• Systems design procurement complete	Q4 2027*

BLE Community Engagement Schedule



Thank you.



 [*soundtransit.org*](https://soundtransit.org)

