



ST3 City Team | Seattle Design Commission

March 6, 2025 | Hybrid/MS Teams

Overview

1. ST3 City Team, roles and structure
2. 2025 Major Activities
3. Discussion + Future briefings



ST3 in Seattle

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

2026: Pinehurst infill station (2&3-Lines)

2031: South Graham Street infill station (1-Line)

2032: West Seattle Link Extension

4-station extension of 3-Line (West Seattle to Everett), with Duwamish River crossing and West Seattle tunnel

2039: Ballard Link Extension

9-station extension of 1-Line (Ballard to Tacoma), with new transit-only downtown tunnel from CID to Seattle Center) and new Ship Canal tunnel crossing



ST3 City Team

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

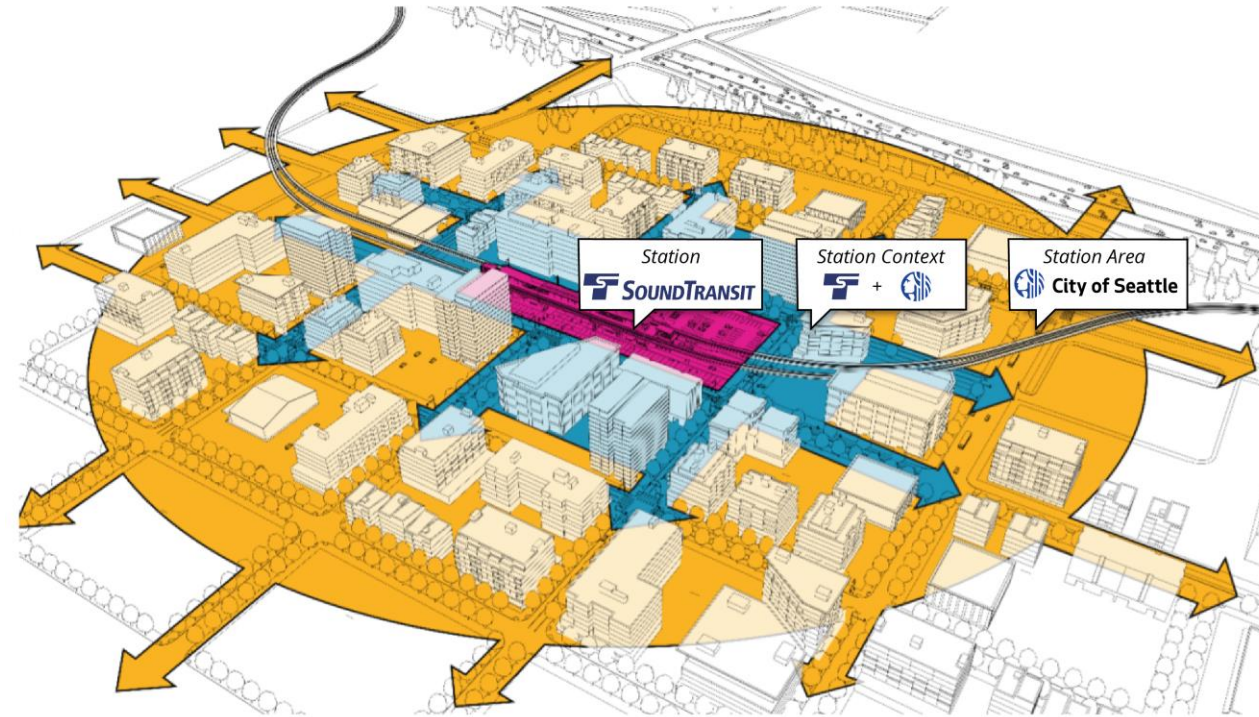
While Sound Transit is the regional agency delivering these capital investments, the **ST3 City Team** is an interdepartmental *One Seattle* effort that partners with Sound Transit to help bring these projects to Seattle communities.

Led by the Office of the Waterfront, Civic Projects, and Sound Transit, the ST3 City Team relies on subject matter expertise and leadership from across City departments.



How the ST3 City Team supports ST3 projects

- **Regulatory roles** defined by statute and code, including project review and permitting.
- **Partnering roles** via our 2018 Partnering Agreement with a focus on leadership across departments, intensive staff coordination, and streamlined permitting.
- **Delivery roles** to develop and deliver numerous plans and projects to support ST3, including station area planning and access projects.



Example: Pigeon Point

The ST3 City Team and Sound Transit are minimizing and mitigating impacts to Pigeon Point and the West Duwamish Greenbelt through pre-permitting collaboration, including:

- Develop a restoration plan that prioritizes ecological functioning and habitat preservation. *(Leads: SDCI)*
- Support creation of a Tree and Vegetation Management Plan that describes impacts and tree replacement approach per established City policy. *(Leads: SDCI, SDOT, OSE)*
- Identify new parkland to mitigate the loss of 3+ acres from the WSLE guideway construction, in compliance with Ord 118477. *(Leads: SDOT, SPR, FAS)*



Image: Sound Transit, Presentation to the Seattle Design Commission, Potential terraced design concept, July 2024

Example: SODO Segment

The ST3 City Team and Sound Transit are collaborating on early critical path efforts for this first ST3 segment, including:

- Support utility relocation, e.g., transmission lines and water mains, to allow for light rail construction. *(Leads: SCL, SPU, SDOT)*
- Manage proximity of new light rail guideway to City properties and structures. *(Leads: FAS, SCL, SFD, SDOT)*
- Redesign 4th Avenue South for the closure of E3 busway and introduction of new bus volumes into the corridor. *(Leads: SDOT)*
- Plan for safe access and transit-oriented development near the future SODO station. *(Leads: OPCD, SDOT)*



Image: Sound Transit, Presentation to the Seattle Design Commission, Potential pedestrian access design concept, November 2024

Example: Design Guidelines

Adopted in 2024 by Joint Director's Rule (OPCD, SDCI, SDOT), the Guidelines are intended to:

- Improve predictability for designers and planners;
- Share the City's expectations for the station and public realm design to guide the development of stations and station area investments;
- Serve as the basis for evaluation by City staff, Boards, and/or Commissions;
- Supplement the City's various adopted design guidance and development standards for station and right-of-way design.

CITY OF SEATTLE

LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT FACILITY DESIGN GUIDELINES

June 2024

Example: Street Concept Plan

Adopted in 2024 by Joint Director's Rule (OPCD, SDOT), the Plan is intended to:

- Provide a vision and design for how streets will look in the future
- Align with modal networks in the Seattle Transportation Plan
- Advance Vision Zero principles
- Build on past neighborhood planning efforts
- Guide future project implementation in station areas

West Seattle Light Rail Station Area Street Concept Plan



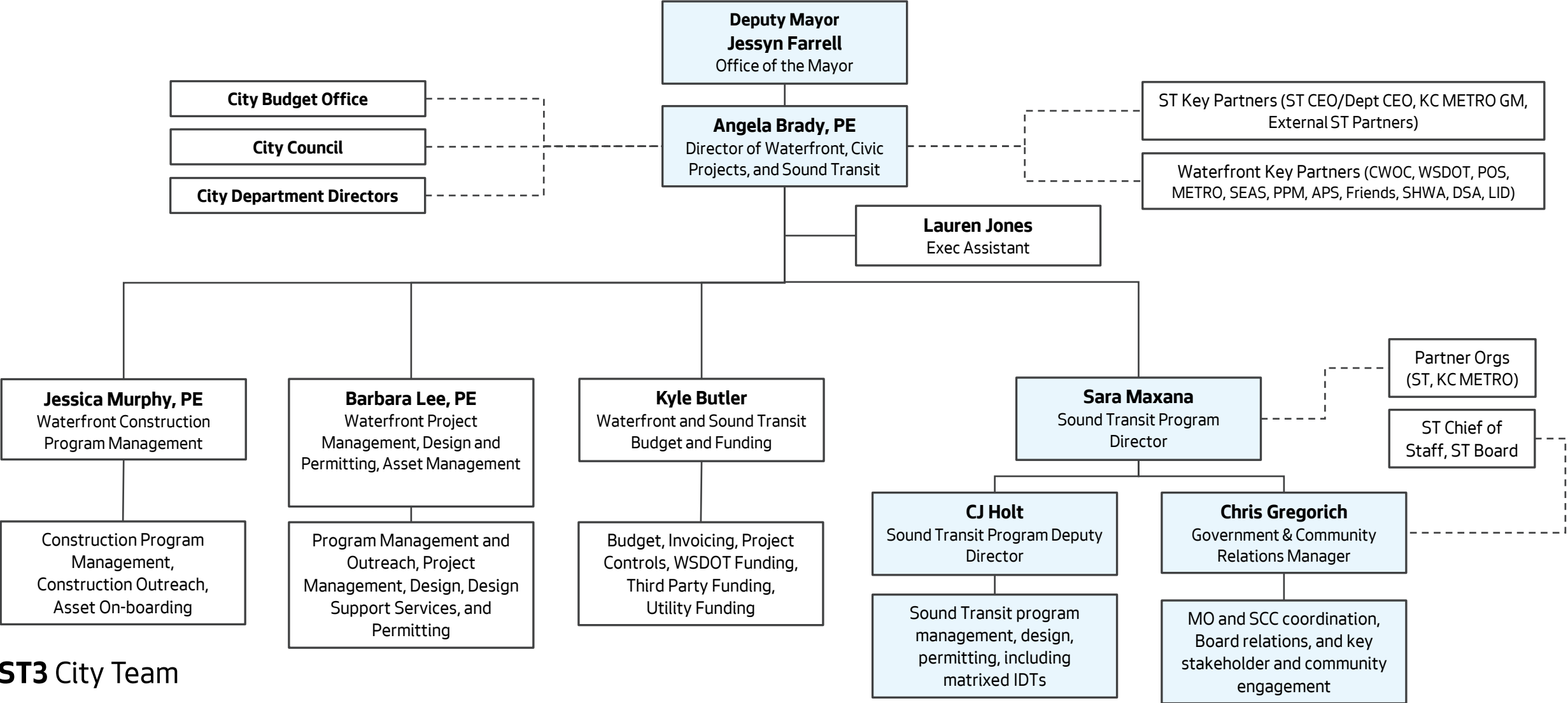
Executive Order 2025-02

A One Seattle Commitment to Expedite Light Rail Expansion

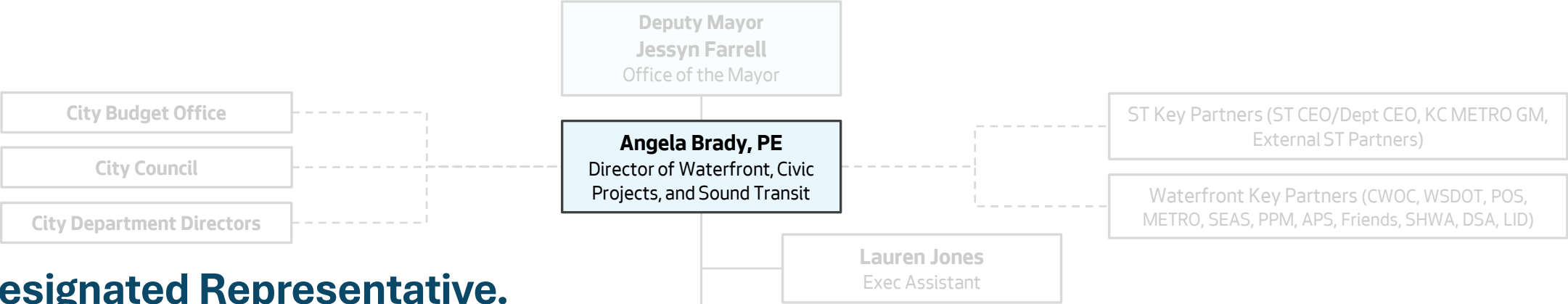
- Organization: Expand of the Office of the Waterfront, Civic Projects, & Sound Transit
- Permitting: Develop legislation to streamline the permit process for these major projects
- Resources: Fund additional staff across City departments to support design, permitting, construction, and station area planning
- Rider experience: Create a four-year work plan to ensure a safe and excellent transit experience, including station design, access improvements, safety enhancements, and equitable transit-oriented development



Office of Waterfront, Civic Projects, and Sound Transit



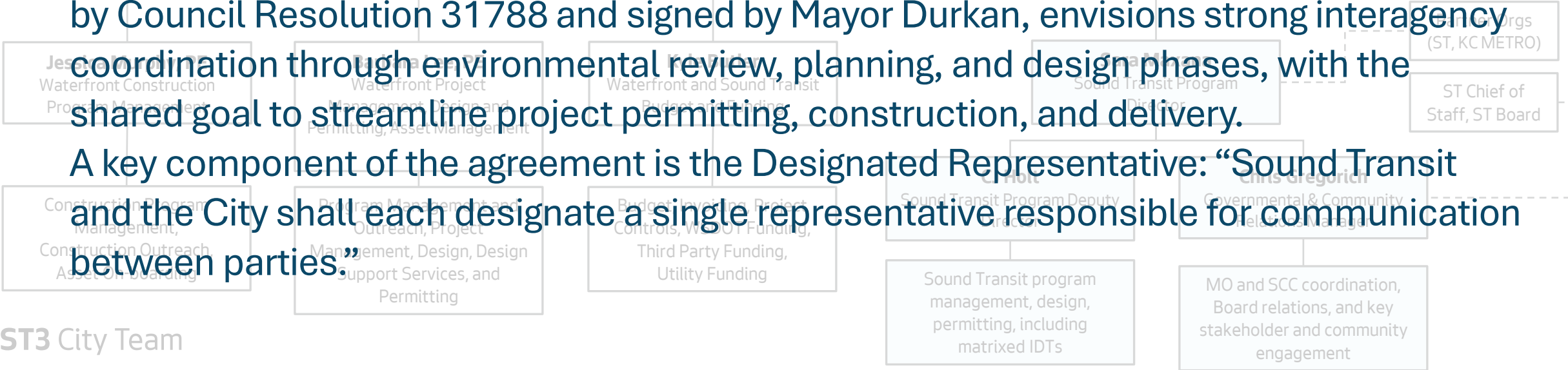
Office of Waterfront, Civic Projects, and Sound Transit



ST3 Designated Representative.

The 2018 Partnering Agreement between Sound Transit and the City of Seattle, adopted by Council Resolution 31788 and signed by Mayor Durkan, envisions strong interagency coordination through environmental review, planning, and design phases, with the shared goal to streamline project permitting, construction, and delivery.

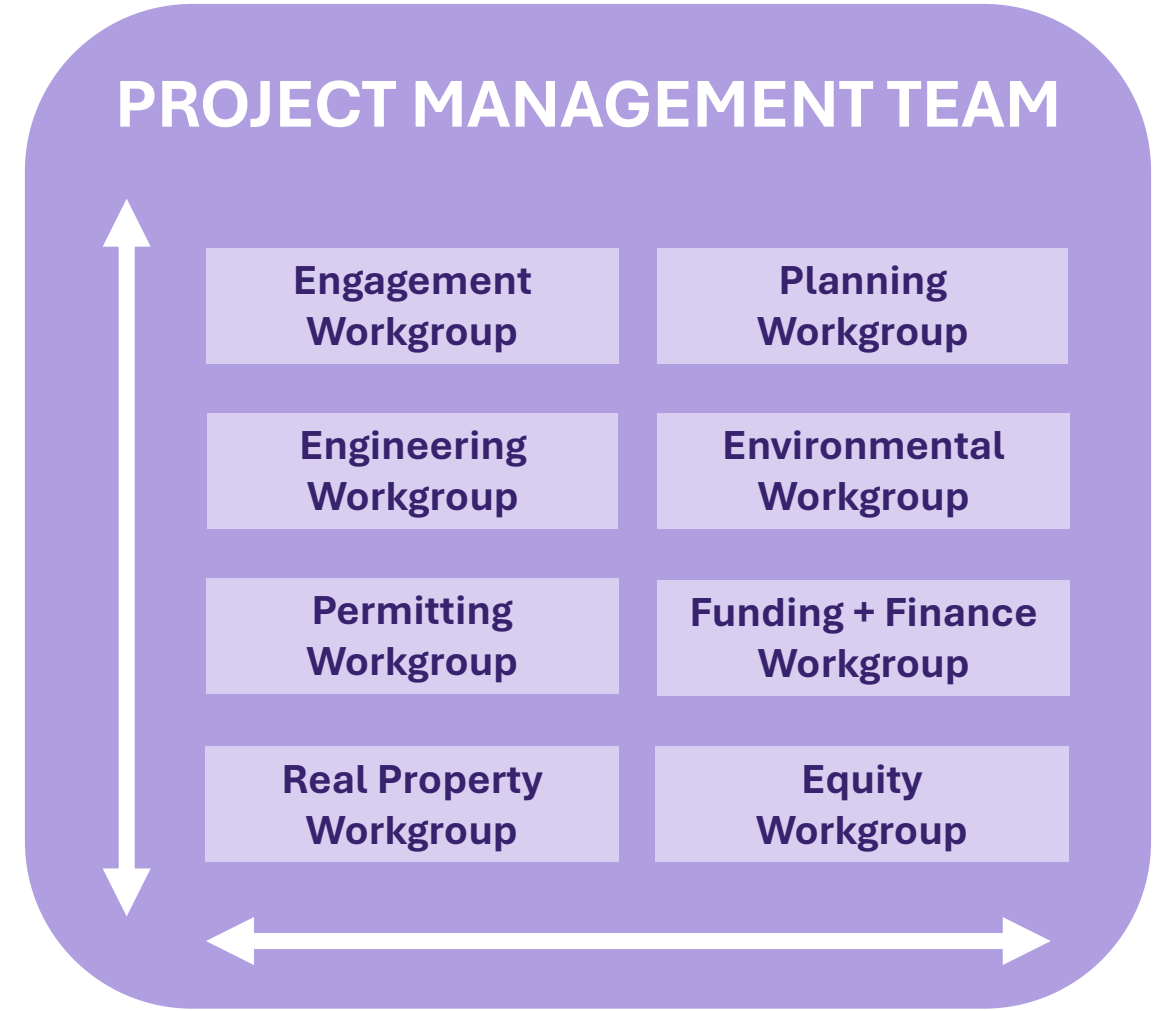
A key component of the agreement is the Designated Representative: “Sound Transit and the City shall each designate a single representative responsible for communication between parties.”



ST3 City Team interdepartmental structures

The **Office of the Waterfront, Civic Projects, and Sound Transit**, leads the ST3 City Team—coordinating efforts of **eight interdepartmental workgroups** with staff spanning over a dozen City departments.

A **project management team** liaises with Sound Transit managers, and coordinates issue elevation and resolution across workgroups and departmental leadership.



Project Management Team

The **Project Management Team** manages ST3 projects for the City of Seattle, overseeing interdisciplinary deliverables, monitoring issues for elevation and resolution, and serving as points of contact for specific projects within the City Team and with Sound Transit.

Lead departments: OWCPST

2025 major activities:

- Transmit legislation to adopt the WSLE project
- Advance PE review for BLE project
- Develop internal structures and protocols to transition to project permitting and construction



Engagement Workgroup

The **Engagement Workgroup** manages efforts to ensure that stakeholders and community members are engaged in the City of Seattle's work related to ST3 projects—including engagement on City-led work, such as code amendments and station area planning, and support for Sound Transit's community engagement on the ST3 projects themselves.

Lead departments: OWCPST, SDOT, OPCD, DON

2025 major activities:

- Lead engagement in Light Rail Land Use Code Amendments
- Lead engagement in WSLE Station Area Planning
- Support engagement in BLE Environmental Review



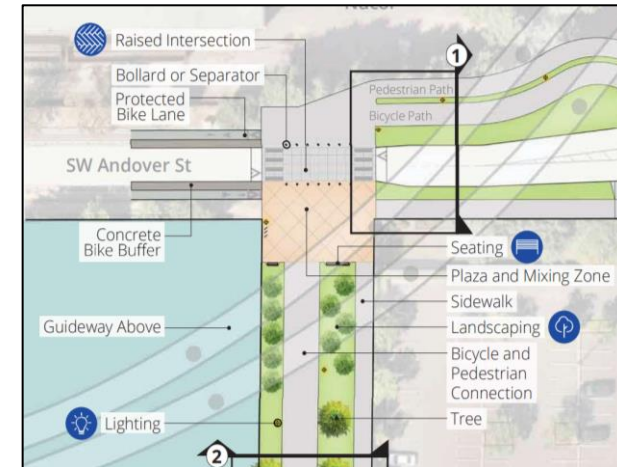
Planning Workgroup

The **Planning Workgroup** coordinates station design and station area planning efforts, collaborating with Sound Transit to ensure that all aspects of the project are well-integrated with the communities they serve and that they deliver multi-benefit outcomes.

Lead departments: OWCPST, OPCD, SDOT

2025 major activities:

- Begin station area planning and advance access projects for WSLE stations
- Begin street concept planning and early access project development for BLE stations
- Advance planning for transit-oriented development at future stations



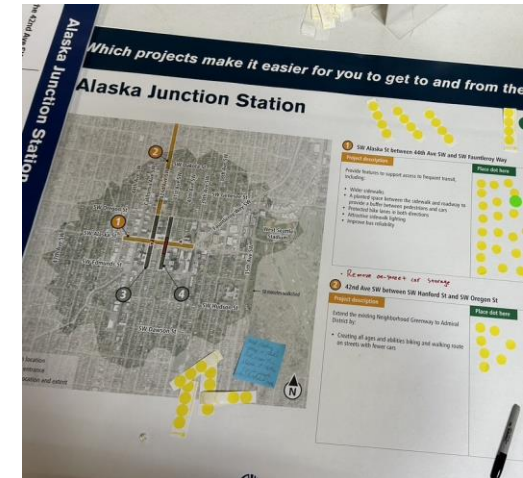
West Seattle Light Rail Station Area
Street Concept Plan

Planning Workgroup

ACCESS PROJECTS

Non-motorized Access Allowance (NMAA): Each new station includes an allowance from Sound Transit to create safe, direct walking and bicycling routes to surrounding neighborhoods, businesses, and community gathering places.

- **Overall:** Staff are working with Sound Transit to refine the methodology for selecting NMAA projects (Screening step and Prioritization step)
- **WSLE:** Project list went through an initial screening and public engagement process. Subset of projects were then designed to 10%. Prioritization will occur later this year.
- **BLE:** Project list was created and reviewed by SMEs. After methodology is finalized, projects will be scored through screening process.
- **S Graham St:** Initial project list is in development



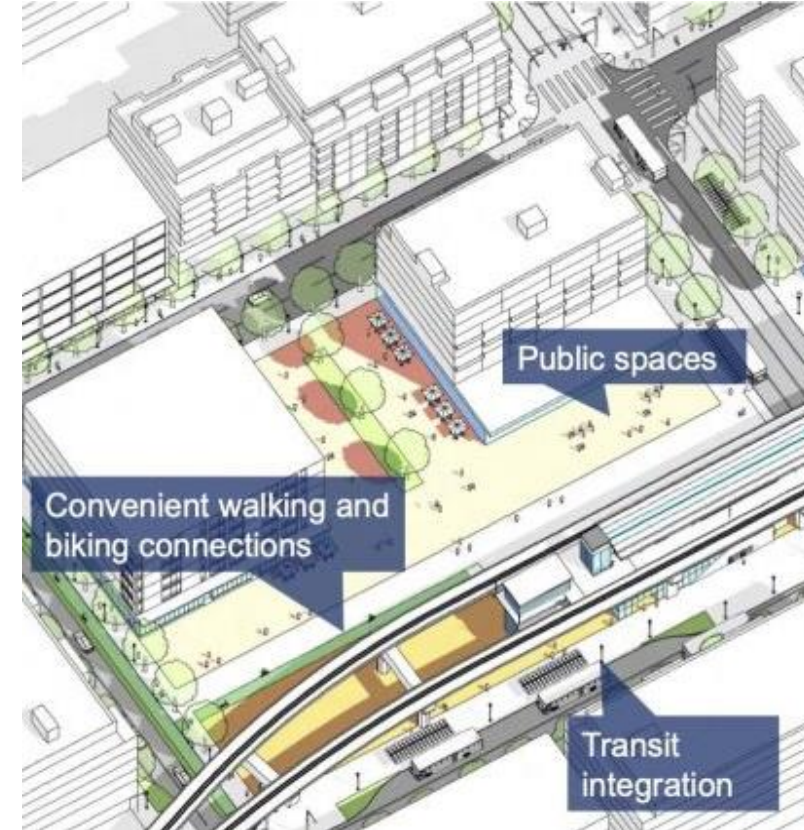
Engagement Board from
October 2023 Open House

Planning Workgroup

STATION AREA PLANNING

OPCD and SDOT are coordinating on community planning processes to explore opportunities to grow and improve mobility around future light rail stations.

- Initial focus on West Seattle Junction + Avalon; Delridge; and Graham Street
- Developing engagement plans and coordinating with City departments
- Summarizing and building on what we've heard already
- Anticipated launch of public engagement in 2025

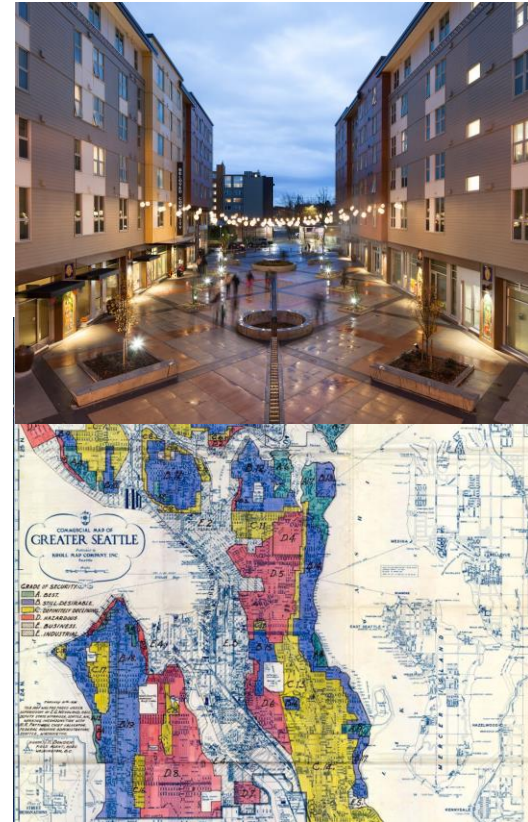


Planning Workgroup

EQUITABLE TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (ETOD)

OPCD is leading the ETOD program to center community priorities and repair harm through development opportunities.

- Approach: ETOD centers communities as decision-makers in the planning process to support a vision for community-led and –owned development
- 2025 Key Activities: Onboard consultants and conduct community processes, including a citywide Community Advisory Group (CAG); Place-based Groups in Chinatown International District (CID) & Delridge, and Remnant Parcels technical analysis
- Final Deliverable: ETOD Strategy & Implementation Plan anticipated to be final in December 2026



Top photo of Plaza Roberto Maestas courtesy of SMR architects; bottom photo courtesy of HistoryLink.com

Engineering Workgroup

The **Engineering Workgroup** coordinates with Sound Transit on the design of ST3 project elements affecting selected, complex City of Seattle infrastructure and operations and advise on other engineering and design topics as requested by City of Seattle or Sound Transit leadership.

Lead departments: OWCPST, SDOT, SDCI SCL, SPU, SFD, many others

2025 major activities:

- Advance engineering on select topics
- Support value engineering for WSLE
- Support preliminary engineering for BLE

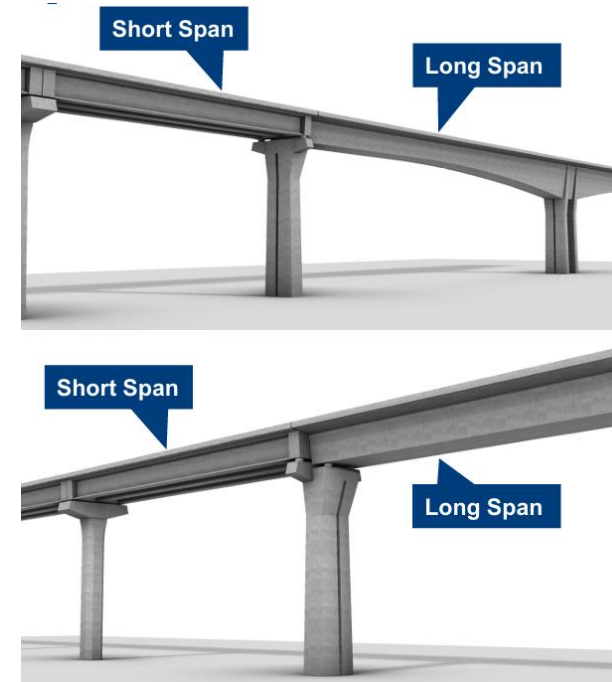


Image: Examples of transitions between short and long span structures, Sound Transit presentation to SDC, July 2024

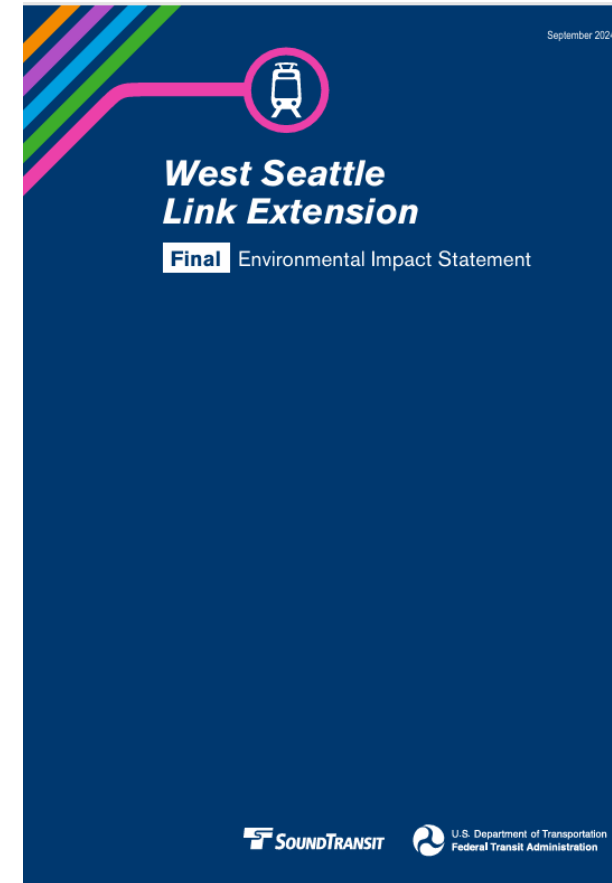
Environmental Workgroup

The **Environmental Workgroup** manages subject-matter experts across the City to inform, review, and comment on Sound Transit's environmental documents prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) for the ST3 projects.

Lead departments: OWCPST, SDOT, many others

2025 major activities:

- Support mitigation planning for WSLE, including impacts to Parks (Section 4f) and historic properties (Section 106)
- Review the BLE Draft EIS and support selection of a preferred alternative for study in the FEIS



Permitting Workgroup

The **Permitting Workgroup** coordinates the City departments with responsibility for discrete permits to identify permitting tools that will be used to advance the projects, identify and administer any policy and code changes necessary to authorize the identified tools, and coordinate application of the tools internally among City departments and externally with ST.

Lead departments: SDCI, SDOT

2025 major activities:

- Advance code amendment legislation
- Progress early permitting for WSLE



Permitting Workgroup

LAND USE CODE AMENDMENTS

Sound Transit and the ST3 City Team have been working for four years to identify code changes to streamline permitting and resolve code conflicts.

Summary of proposed code changes:

- Refine criteria for permit reviews
- Establish light rail-specific design standards
- Create project-level tree mitigation & management plan
- Revise bicycle parking requirements
- Identify Seattle Design Commission as advisory review body
- Streamline Master Use Permit process



Planning for Light Rail

Tree and Vegetation Management Plans


The construction of new light rail facilities will impact trees. The City will require Sound Transit to develop Tree and Vegetation Management Plans for the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions to ensure a clear and consistent approach for tree protection and replacement.

The requirements for the plans will be defined in the Seattle Land Use Code and will align with City policies:

- Restoring ecological function in environmentally sensitive locations
- Replacing lost tree canopy and creating new tree canopy
- Replacing trees lost from City property with a minimum of 3:1
- Locating trees in high-opportunity areas, such as along publicly-owned streets and within parks


Project-level tree and vegetation management plans provide more information about affected trees and a documented strategy for project-wide tree replacement at on-site and off-site locations.

These plans will make it clear how trees would be added along streets, within parks and natural areas, and as construction sites are restored.



In coordination with the Seattle Department of Transportation, the Office of Sustainability and Environment, and Seattle Parks and Recreation, these plans will also create a more equitable tree canopy by planting trees in neighborhoods or public spaces with less existing tree canopy, consistent with the One Seattle Tree Plan.

More Information
www.seattle.gov/light-rail

 City of Seattle

Permitting Workgroup

LAND USE CODE AMENDMENTS – SDC ROLES

Proposed land use code amendments would identify the Seattle Design Commission as an advisory review body.

What that means:

- SDC will review light rail transit facilities at PE/30/60 with a 90% briefing
- SDC recommend conditions of approval to the Director's of SDCI and SDOT based on City of Seattle Light Rail Design Guidelines (DR2-2024)
- SDC retains the ability to provide comments on a variety of topics; However, to ensure streamlined permitting the SDC recommendations *must* include project elements defined in the code and permit plan

Real Property Workgroup

Funding + Finance Workgroup

The **Real Property Workgroup** coordinates efforts between City departments with real property impacted by Sound Transit link extension projects and our Sound Transit counterparts.

Primary departments: FAS, SCL, SDOT, SFD, SPR, SPU

The **Funding and Finance Workgroup** manages the City of Seattle's approach to developing, reviewing, confirming, and negotiating with Sound Transit on balancing risk, cost, and possible funding.

Primary departments: OWCPST, FAS, CFD, CBO, SDOT



Image: Fire Station 14, Bassetti Architects website

Review: 2025 Major Activities

Citywide

- Transmit land use code amendments to support light rail transit facilities
- Develop ST3 City Team workplan and resource plan

West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE)

- Transmit legislation to adopt the WSLE project
- Support final design and early permitting
- Prepare for project construction, including impacts to public and private properties and right-of-way
- Develop station access projects and begin station area planning



2025 Major Activities cont'd

South Graham Street and Boeing Access Road

- Support identification of preferred station options

Ballard Link Extension (BLE)

- Review the Ballard Draft EIS and support identification of preferred alternative for study in the FEIS
- Update the Joint-Agency Racial Equity Toolkit
- Complete the South Downtown Hub planning process and identify next steps for implementation
- Support preliminary engineering for BLE system
- Develop select street concept plans and begin station access project planning



Upcoming SDC Touchpoints

Formal Project Reviews in 2025-2027*

- WSLE: 30% project reviews (4)
- BLE: PE/pre-permitting project reviews (# TBD)
- S Graham St: PE/pre-permitting project review

Quarterly Updates from City Team

Discussion

Questions?

Topics for future updates?





THANK YOU!

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Sara Maxana, Sound Transit Program Director
Chris Gregorich, ST3 Government & Community Relations Manager