



# ***West Seattle and Ballard***

Link Extensions

Level 2 RET Memo

**September 2018**

# Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Overview.....	1
1.1.1	Project Description .....	1
1.1.2	Racial Equity Toolkit Collaborative .....	3
<b>2</b>	<b>LEVEL 2 ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION CRITERIA.....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1	Enhance Mobility and Access for Communities of Color and Low-Income Populations.....	4
2.2	Create Opportunities for Equitable Development that Benefit Communities of Color .....	4
2.3	Avoid Disproportionate Impacts on Communities of Color and Low-Income Populations.....	5
<b>3</b>	<b>CHINATOWN/INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT STATION.....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1	Neighborhood Context and Overview.....	6
3.2	Level 2 Alternatives.....	7
3.3	Level 2 Evaluation Summary .....	8
3.4	Chinatown/International District Community Engagement and Input .....	11
3.4.1	Community Engagement Events .....	11
3.4.2	Community Input .....	11
<b>4</b>	<b>DELTRIDGE STATION EVALUATION.....</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1	Neighborhood Context and Overview.....	13
4.2	Level 2 Alternatives.....	14
4.3	Level 2 Evaluation Summary .....	15
4.4	Delridge Community Engagement and Input.....	17
4.4.1	Community Engagement Events .....	17
4.4.2	Community Input .....	18
<b>5</b>	<b>QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION THROUGHOUT PROJECT PLANNING .....</b>	<b>18</b>

**Figures**

Figure 1-1    West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions ..... 2

Figure 3-2    SODO and Chinatown/International District Segment – Level 2 Alternatives..... 7

Figure 4-2    West Seattle/Duwamish Segment – Level 2 Alternatives .....14

**Appendices**

Appendix A    Chinatown/International District Segment – Level 2 Alternatives

## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
RET	Racial Equity Tool Kit
ST3	Sound Transit 3 Plan
WSBLE	West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Overview

### 1.1.1 Project Description

Sound Transit along with partner agencies, communities, and other stakeholders are working together to develop a project that would deliver new light rail service to Ballard and West Seattle, as well as station locations in between. At this time, Sound Transit is advancing the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions (WSBLE) Project through the Alternatives Development phase. During Alternatives Development, Sound Transit began with the “Representative Project” included in the Sound Transit 3 Plan (ST3) and is further exploring the specific route, station locations and other project elements based on additional public engagement and technical analysis. The ST3 Representative Project itself is the result of extensive, years long planning and public involvement work, including high-capacity transit studies, the process to update the agency’s long-range plan, and the work that developed the ST3 Plan approved by voters in 2016. Sound Transit is engaging the public and agencies in an intensive external engagement process that will lead to Sound Transit Board identification of a Preferred Alternative, as well as other alternatives to evaluate in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The WSBLE project would provide fast, reliable light rail connections to dense residential and job centers throughout the region and add a new downtown Seattle light rail tunnel to provide efficient operating capacity for the entire regional system. The ST3 Representative Project for the extension to West Seattle would operate on a 4.7-mile elevated guideway from downtown Seattle to West Seattle’s Alaska Junction neighborhood and include a new rail-only fixed span across the Duwamish River.

The ST3 Representative Project for the Ballard extension would operate 7.1 miles from downtown Seattle to Ballard’s Market Street area and include a new 3.3-mile rail-only tunnel from Chinatown/International District to South Lake Union and Seattle Center/Uptown. The ST3 Representative Project for the Ballard extension would serve three stations in Ballard, Interbay and near Smith Cove, and six tunnel stations at Seattle Center, South Lake Union, Denny, Westlake, Midtown and Chinatown/International District areas.

A map of both extensions for the ST3 Representative Project is shown on **Figure 1-1** (West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions).



Figure 1-1 West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions

## **1.1.2 Racial Equity Toolkit Collaborative**

### **Racial Equity Toolkit Collaborative**

Sound Transit and the City of Seattle are partnering on a Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) for the WSBLE project. The RET process is a cornerstone of the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative, and is supported on the City side by an interdepartmental team composed of the Office of Planning and Community Development, Seattle Department of Transportation, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, and the Office for Civil Rights. The vision of the Seattle Office for Civil Rights, which houses the Race and Social Justice Initiative Strategic Team is: A City of Liberated People where Communities Historically Impacted by Racism, Oppression, and Colonization Hold Power and Thrive. To do this requires ending individual racism, institutional racism and structural racism by shifting real decision making power and equitable resources to those most harmed by a lingering legacy and reality of racism in our community. The Racial Equity Toolkit lays out a process and a set of questions to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, initiatives, programs, and budget issues to address the impacts on racial equity.<sup>1</sup> The RET process also supports Sound Transit's Environmental Justice analysis to be included in the Environmental Impact Statement.

This report provides an overview of RET information gathered during Level 1 and Level 2 alternatives evaluation and screening, and how that information is being used to inform the project development process. This information will also inform the WSBLE project's Stakeholder Advisory Group and Elected Leadership Group that make recommendations to Sound Transit on which alternatives should be carried forward into Level 3 analysis, as well as the Sound Transit Board that ultimately identifies the Preferred Alternative, as well as other alternatives to be evaluated in an Environmental Impact Statement.

In April 2018, the interagency RET team identified the following desired RET outcomes:

- Enhance mobility and access for communities of color and low-income populations;
- Create opportunities for equitable development that benefit communities of color;
- Avoid disproportionate impacts on communities of color and low-income populations; and
- Meaningfully involve communities of color and low-income populations in the project.

To focus its work toward the above outcomes in the first level of alternatives development for the WSBLE project, the RET team formed two work groups: one group focused on engagement strategies and the other on data analysis.

The data work group was tasked with compiling and analyzing data on race within the corridor. Initial work described the racial and ethnic makeup of communities within a half-mile catchment of stations along the representative alignment, utilizing five-year American Community Survey estimates (2011-2016). Chinatown/International District (CID) was found to be the only station area densely populated by communities of color in the WSBLE project corridor. In West Seattle, a higher percentage of communities of color lie within the bike and transit sheds of the Delridge

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/civilrights/programs/race-and-social-justice-initiative/racial-equity-toolkit>  
[https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/Racial%20Equity%20Toolkit\\_FINAL\\_August2012\\_with%20new%20cncl%20districts\(0\).pdf](https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/Racial%20Equity%20Toolkit_FINAL_August2012_with%20new%20cncl%20districts(0).pdf)



and Avalon stations, but are outside of those stations' immediate walksheds. Other station areas along the project's representative alignment are generally located within areas having populations of color at or below the city average and relatively higher average household incomes.

The external engagement work group focused on planning and implementing a targeted community engagement strategy to better understand the priorities, desires and concerns of communities of color along the WSBLE project corridor, and to incorporate that information into project planning and evaluation measures. Direct community input is a vital component of the RET process because information such as places, businesses, and resources of cultural significance to communities of color cannot be inferred or understood from census data alone.

## **2 LEVEL 2 ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The Level 2 analysis for all alternatives had over 50 quantitative and/or qualitative measures to help inform the screening process. The following sections describe the most relevant Level 2 alternatives evaluation criteria, which were informed by feedback from the community and based on the outcomes set forth by the RET.

### **2.1 Enhance Mobility and Access for Communities of Color and Low-Income Populations**

Level 2 screening measured access to opportunity for minority and low-income populations by evaluating the activity nodes served within station areas, and how the project would improve access for minority and low-income populations along the system to these nodes. This measure also evaluates access for populations in the study area to major regional employment and educational destinations. Higher performing alternatives would improve access to activity nodes for higher than city average populations of minority and low-income populations, medium performing alternatives would not affect access to activity nodes for these populations, and lower performing alternatives would worsen access.

### **2.2 Create Opportunities for Equitable Development that Benefit Communities of Color**

Level 2 screening evaluated equitable development opportunities using a qualitative assessment of the potential of a particular station location to deliver equitable transit-oriented development (eTOD) outcomes, specifically affordable housing. Per Sound Transit's Equitable TOD policy, any property that is surplus to the agency's need following project construction and is suitable for development as housing will be first offered to qualified developers of affordable housing. The Sound Transit Board of Directors also has discretion to sell at a discount or transfer suitable surplus property to qualified developers of affordable housing. Level 2 evaluation included estimates of net residual land available for affordable housing development beyond the footprint of the station and guideway within the assemblage of parcels required for station and right-of-way construction for different project alternatives.

Potential construction staging areas have not yet been identified for Level 2 alternatives, and may present additional challenges, community impacts or opportunities that will be evaluated in later stages of project development.



## 2.3 Avoid Disproportionate Impacts on Communities of Color and Low-Income Populations

Level 2 screening measured the potential for burden on minority and low-income populations by evaluating potential acquisitions and displacements (residential and business) and visual, noise and construction impacts that would affect minority and low-income populations relative to other communities. This included displacement risk from station area redevelopment, as well as potential transportation, access, noise, vibration, and visual effects that could disrupt existing residents, businesses, and social service providers. The evaluation also considered relative duration of the construction and impacts to high volume traffic areas.

On top of the quantitative assessment of potential direct (physical) residential and business displacements due to property acquisition and other construction-related impacts, community engagement and input help shed light on other types of displacement risks such as economic displacement and cultural displacement.

Economic displacement occurs when a household is compelled to relocate due to the economic pressures of increased housing costs or other costs of living. Increasing housing costs may present in a variety of forms:

- Rent increases imposed by property owners on households renting from them
- Property tax and interest rate increases that rise beyond the means of the property owner
- Economic conditions that bring widespread changes to communities, such as loss of an employer or a depressed job market, which can change a community's ability to afford their homes
- Systemic conditions such as institutional racism, which disproportionately harm the economic well-being of communities of color, and manifest in evolving ways over time

Cultural displacement occurs when people choose to move because their neighbors and culturally related businesses and institutions have left the area. For communities of color, immigrants, and refugees, social cohesion can often play a bigger role in location decisions than for other populations, and social networks within racial and ethnic communities may take on a greater importance than for other populations. Measuring cultural displacement is difficult since no systematic survey of households exists that asks why they have chosen to relocate. However, some indicators of cultural displacement can be measured at the neighborhood scale, including:

- Loss of small businesses, particularly those owned by or serving cultural communities
- Direct or economic displacement of cultural communities, to the point that the community no longer has the critical mass of members to constitute a cultural home
- Loss of other cultural institutions and gathering places, such as parks, religious institutions, community centers, and other centers of cultural belonging.

## 3 CHINATOWN/INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT STATION

### 3.1 Neighborhood Context and Overview

- **The CID is a unique cultural community in the city and region**

The Chinatown/International District is a unique hub of cultural importance for the city and its Asian American communities. “A local treasure,” the CID is home to workers, cultural institutions, and community gathering spaces “for predominantly Asian-American groups and Asian and Pacific Islander (API) immigrants, seniors, and young children.”<sup>2</sup> It was originally settled in the mid-to-late 1800s and has survived and grown in character and extent since then.

- **The CID has endured a disproportionate share of impacts from infrastructure projects, dating back to the 1920s**

A legacy of public projects has set boundaries around this historic neighborhood, beginning with a major street extension in the 1920s, which displaced an earlier Chinatown previously located near 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S and S Washington St. Later projects include the building of I-5 in the 1960s, which created a new eastern boundary to the District. Kingdome construction occurred nearby in the 1970s, the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel in the late 1980s, and the Seattle Streetcar in the 2010s. Current planning and community engagement work in the CID has shown more than fifty five active or planned projects within or adjacent to the geographic boundaries of this community. Most recently, the Seattle Streetcar construction produced impacts that were reportedly very disruptive for businesses and residents alike. These impacts included utility cutoffs and sidewalk and street closures, particularly during Lunar New Year, Little Saigon’s busiest shopping season.

- **CID communities are more vulnerable to a changing built environment than others within the WSBLE corridor**

The CID neighborhood is unique in a number of ways – people of color account for approximately 70% of the population (twice the city average), more than half speak a language other than English at home, median household income is about half the citywide average, and about 1 in 5 are elders. These demographics taken together with increasing development pressures and rising land values mean this community is more vulnerable than others along the WSBLE project corridor. Those vulnerabilities include displacement risk, adverse health outcomes, and loss of social cohesion as communities adjust to a changing built environment.

- **The CID is adjacent to a unique regional transit hub**

The new CID Station will be one of the major transit hubs of the regional system, where riders will be able to transfer between all of the Link Light Rail lines of service, connect with King Street Station, served by Amtrak and the Sounder, as well as a variety of King County Metro and Sound Transit bus routes and the Seattle Streetcar. Though a variety of transit opportunities exist here, ongoing community engagement seeks to shed light on the extent to which the community currently uses light rail or other transit modes.

<sup>2</sup> CID 2020 Healthy Community Action Plan

## 3.2 Level 2 Alternatives

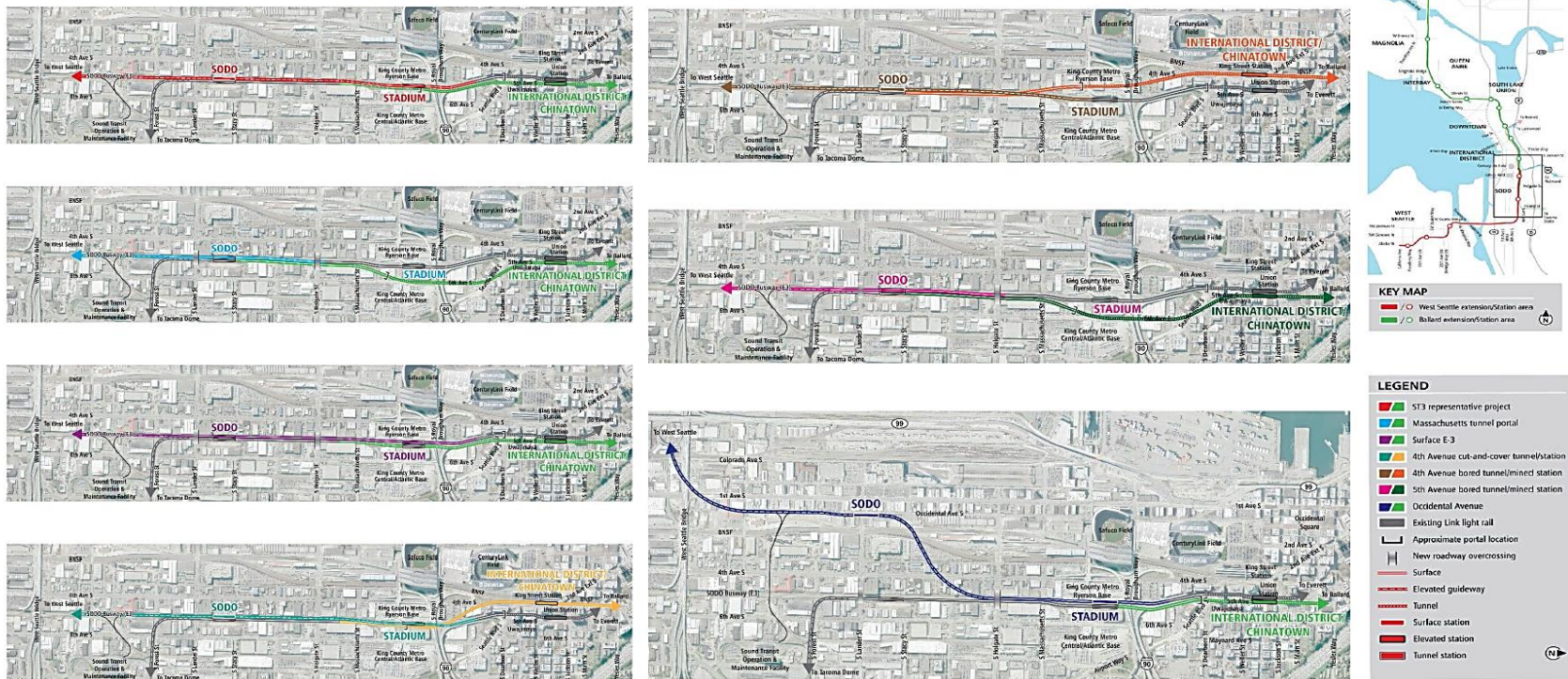


Figure 3-2 SODO and Chinatown/International District Segment – Level 2 Alternatives

### 3.3 Level 2 Evaluation Summary

- *CID alternatives for the WSBLE project present varying degrees of potential construction impacts, with more proximate potential impacts to property and the right of way along the western edge of this community for 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S alternatives, and more potential traffic impacts for the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S alternatives.*
- *Station access opportunities are better for shallow stations than for deep stations.*
- *Based on the Level 2 evaluation measures, it is unclear which alternative(s) would pose the greatest net benefit for the unique multicultural communities of color that live in the CID today.*

#### Overview

Based on community feedback since the beginning of the year and direction from the Stakeholder Advisory Group and Elected Leadership Group of the WSBLE project, seven alternatives for the segment running between SODO and the CID have been developed and evaluated during Level 2. These alternatives include five different station and alignment options serving the Chinatown-International District and surrounding neighborhoods. The alternatives are listed below in a manner that describes both the proposed location of the CID station as well as the method of construction for the station and associated tunnel. Text in parentheses includes the corresponding name of the Level 2 alternative(s) as applicable. These descriptors help communicate the differences between the options in terms of location and construction type, which has implications for construction effects and duration, potential effects to the surrounding community and station access.

- (A) 5th Avenue Cut-and-Cover Tunnel / Cut-and-Cover Station (ST3 Representative Project, Surface E3, and Occidental Ave)
- (B) 5th Avenue Bored Tunnel / Cut-and-Cover Station (Massachusetts Tunnel Portal)
- (C) 5th Avenue Bored Tunnel / Mined Station
- (D) 4th Avenue Cut-and-Cover / Cut-and-Cover Station
- (E) 4th Avenue Bored Tunnel / Mined Station

#### ***Bus/Rail Integration and Passenger Transfer Experience***

Of these five alternatives, two are located on 4th Avenue S and three are located on 5th Avenue S. Each location includes shallow (cut-and-cover) and deep (mined) station options. These alternatives differ in terms of ease of station access and ease of passenger transfers from light rail to light rail as well as other modes, including buses, the Sounder, and Amtrak.

The 4th Avenue alternatives are closer to some buses, the Sounder and Amtrak, but would require a longer transfer between the new and existing light rail lines. The 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue alternatives could also potentially allow for an underground connection from the existing Chinatown/International District station to King Street Station, positioning them to potentially activate Union Station from the existing basement/garage level.

The 5th Avenue alternatives are nearer other bus lines and, in the case of the shallower (cut-and-cover) station options – (A) and (B) in the list above – would provide easier light rail to light rail transfers. The 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue alternatives would, however, be located further from Sounder and Amtrak.



Deeper station alternatives, both the 4th Avenue Bored Tunnel / Mined Station and 5th Avenue Bored Tunnel / Mined Station alternatives, would be about 200 feet deep and would be limited to elevator access only, resulting in less convenient access for patrons entering and exiting the station or transferring.

### **Construction Impacts**

The station and alignment alternatives present varying degrees of potential construction impacts, with more proximate potential impacts to property and the right of way along the western edge of the CID community for the 5th Avenue alternatives, and greater potential traffic impacts for the 4th Avenue alternatives.

As described in more detail below, preliminary assessments of construction durations suggest that the construction impacts of the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue alternatives would occur over a shorter period of time overall (between 4.5 and 6.5 years) than the 4th Avenue alternatives (between 6.5 and 8.25 years). This is due, in part, to the time associated with rebuilding the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S viaduct structure associated with the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue alternatives.

Below is a summary of the geographic extent (or footprint) of potential construction impacts in the CID and durations for each of the alternatives. It should be noted that the estimates below are preliminary and are prepared for alternative comparison purposes only. These estimates are based on limited design and construction sequence analysis work completed to-date and may change as the alternatives are refined in the future.

- The **5th Avenue Cut-and-Cover Tunnel / Cut-and-Cover Station** alternative would result in the largest extent of cut-and-cover impact of all the 5th Avenue options. Surface street disruption would extend for approximately 1,500 feet along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S from approximately Seattle Boulevard to Main Street. Additional surface disruption would be associated with the adjacent off-street construction staging site which would be approximately 80' by 100' in area and which would also serve as the location of a future station entrance.
  - Overall construction duration would be 5 – 6 years.
  - The periods of greatest disruption would be during the first 1 – 2 years (for station box shoring and temporary roadway deck installation phased along 5th Avenue) and during the last 6 months (for roadway deck removal and street restoration). Two-way vehicle traffic would be maintained on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S during these periods although on-street parking would be eliminated (currently 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S is used by 8,500 daily vehicles).
- The **5th Avenue Bored Tunnel / Cut-and-Cover Station** alternative would limit the area of impact to the station box only. Surface street disruption would extend for approximately 500 feet along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S between approximately Jackson Street and south of King Street. Additional surface disruption would be associated with the adjacent off-street construction staging site which would be approximately 80' by 100' in area and which would also serve as the location of a future station entrance.
  - Overall construction duration would be 4.5 – 5.5 years.
  - The periods of greatest disruption would be during the first year (for station box shoring and temporary roadway deck installation) and during the last 6 months (for roadway deck removal and street restoration). Two-way vehicle traffic would

be maintained on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S during these periods although on-street parking would be eliminated.

- The **5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bored Tunnel / Mined Station** alternative would result in the least surface disruption, likely limited to an off-street construction staging site which would be approximately 80' by 100' in area and which would also serve as the location of a future station entrance.
  - Overall construction duration would be 5 – 6.5 years.
  - The period of greatest disruption (for station construction shaft excavation) would be for 1.5 – 2 years. No traffic detours would be anticipated.
- The **4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Cut-and-Cover Tunnel / Cut-and-Cover Station** alternative would result in street right of way disruption extending for approximately 2,700 feet along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S extending from the beginning of the viaduct structure south of Seattle Boulevard to north of Yesler Way.
  - Overall construction duration would be 6.5 – 7.5 years.
  - The period of greatest disruption, requiring a half-street closure of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S, during which traffic detours of 16,500 daily vehicles would be required (for demolition and rebuilding of the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue viaduct bridge structure), would last for 3.5 – 4 years.
- The **4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bored Tunnel / Mined Station** alternative would limit the extent of street right of way disruption on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S to approximately 900 feet from Seattle Boulevard to S. Jackson Street.
  - Overall construction duration would be 6.75 – 8.25 years.
  - The period of greatest disruption, requiring full closure of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S, during which traffic detours of 33,000 daily vehicles would be required (for demolition and rebuilding of a portion of the viaduct bridge structure) would last for 4 – 5.25 years.

### ***Residential and business displacements***

All alternatives are located in areas of high displacement risk based on the City of Seattle's Growth and Equity Analysis, Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan, 2015. Of the Level 2 alternatives evaluated, only the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Cut-and-Cover Tunnel / Cut-and-Cover Station alternative would result in direct residential displacements, which would occur in the Central Business District, with less than 50 displacements anticipated.

The amount of potential business displacements are similar for all three of the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue alternatives. Although specific properties have not been identified for construction staging, business displacements would occur primarily in the CID station area and would be associated with the construction staging site (noted above) adjacent to station. For the options that include a bored tunnel on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, additional displacements would occur near the tunnel portal area in the Stadium area. Although the extent of displacement is relatively low compared to other segments, the higher proportion of minority and low-income residents in this area increases the potential for impacts to businesses important to these populations.

For the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S alternatives, business displacements would occur primarily in the Stadium area and Central Business District.

In the context of the WSBLE Level 2 Evaluation Criteria, "direct displacements" refers to the

need for Sound Transit to acquire or otherwise assume use of private property in order to construct the project, which may permanently change the ownership of the site.

### 3.4 Chinatown/International District Community Engagement and Input

#### 3.4.1 Community Engagement Events

Sound Transit's community engagement in the Chinatown/International District during Level 2 alternatives evaluation included the following events.

##### Briefings

- CID Forum, 5/23/18, 7/25/18, 9/19/18
- Uwajimaya, 9/17/18
- South Downtown Stakeholders, 6/12/18, 7/12/18, 9/10/18  
*Participating organizations have included the Wing Luke Museum, Seattle Chinatown–International District Preservation and Development Authority, Historic South Downtown, Alliance for Pioneer Square, Chinatown–International District BIA, International Community Health Services, Uwajimaya and Interim CDA*
- Chinatown-International District BIA, Board of Directors, 6/7/18
- CID Framework, Capital Projects Coordination Workgroup, 5/25/18, 6/22/18
- Union Station Tour, 5/25/18

##### Social Service Provider Interviews

- Wing Luke Museum, 8/8/18
- Seniors in Action Foundation, 8/1/18
- Chinese Information & Service Center, 7/30/18

##### Public Meetings

- Downtown Open House/ Neighborhood Forum, 9/11/18

##### Festivals

- CID Night Market, 9/8/18
- Celebrate Little Saigon, 8/26/18
- Dragon Fest, 7/14/18–7/15/18

#### 3.4.2 Community Input

Community perspectives and feedback are critical in understanding how the proposed alternatives would benefit and/or burden communities in the CID. The following include key findings from conversations with the community.

- **Inclusive, ongoing engagement is imperative to outcomes that benefit CID communities**

We have heard that past public projects have been “done to the community rather than for the community.” It is clear how important ongoing, meaningful and inclusive public engagement is through all phases of any capital project, with specific suggestions to be mindful of language



barriers, culturally responsive, center racial equity considerations and share project information early.

➤ **Construction impacts are a top concern to CID communities**

We heard deep concerns about construction impacts along 5th Avenue S and that it is critical that there be minimal impact on Chinatown business operations during all phases of the construction. We also heard that the community has experienced worsening traffic over the past several years on 5th and 6th avenues, and that there needs to be a balance between construction impacts on traffic and impacts on the neighborhood.

One community member wrote to share an example: “Six years ago, prior to the First Hill Streetcar construction, the City rushed to come through our neighborhood and lay down new infrastructure. Due to inadequate planning, the City agencies frequently disconnected our businesses and senior facilities from water and power without sufficient notification. In addition, the City was negligent in ignoring the area's most important cultural event of the year Chinese New Year.”

➤ **Support from the CID and Pioneer Square communities for leveraging a new station to improve connections between transit modes, activate Union Station and improve the existing Chinatown/International District station and plaza**

Many have shared interest in activating Union Station, the plaza above the existing Chinatown/International District station and creating more seamless connections from the CID to Union Station to King Street Station and Pioneer Square. Ideas like including retail and concessions to support that activation have been shared often.

During one forum, we heard strong feedback that aligning the existing “International District/Chinatown” station name in accordance with City Council Ordinance 119297 is “extremely important to the Chinese community for identity, cultural, historic and local economic marketing reasons” and is “confusing for visitors.”

➤ **Support for continued exploration of both 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue South alternatives**

We have heard that Sound Transit should continue exploring alternatives with stations at 4th and 5th Avenues to determine which would best serve the neighborhood. We have also heard that we need to coordinate with the City of Seattle to better understand the lifespan of the 4th Avenue viaduct and that if there is a need to replace the structure, determine whether it is possible to align the projects, so as not to burden the community twice unnecessarily.

➤ **The user experience and comfort using light rail is fundamental to understanding whether alternatives enhance mobility and access**

Many emphasized the importance of easy passenger transfers, particularly for the elderly and those with more limited mobility. The more shallow station options appear more strongly favored for that reason.

Some community members have also expressed that they need to know how to use the light rail since their primary method of transportation is currently the Metro bus, which is familiar and has a live person available to answer questions and provide guidance. Others noted that community members that live outside of the neighborhood often take public transit to commute into the neighborhood (e.g., Metro buses, light rail, streetcar) for culturally responsive services, to go

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shopping, visit with family or attend community events and that taking light rail to the airport is the most common use within the community.

- **Strong interest in a comprehensive and coordinated cross-agency strategy to address displacement and gentrification in the CID**

Many have shared strong concerns about displacement impacts in the CID, both direct and more immediate as well as long-term and indirect such as economic and cultural displacements in the CID. Additionally, we have heard interest in cross-agency coordination and convening with community focused on understanding and addressing these issues.

We have heard some interest in understanding future transit oriented development potential near the stations in partnership with the community, particularly to increase affordable housing while including retail on the ground floor.

## **4 DELRIDGE STATION EVALUATION**

### **4.1 Neighborhood Context and Overview**

- **A community of different neighborhoods with varying demographics by geography**

Delridge is not one place, but a collection of communities defined by natural features, parks and trails. It also has many community and cultural organizations. Community-based initiatives and City levies have created substantial improvements like the Youngstown Cultural Arts Center, the Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail and Delridge Day. For the purposes of this RET analysis, we will distinguish between North Delridge, which hosts all of the proposed Delridge station location alternatives, and the Delridge corridor, which includes the following subareas: North Delridge, High Point, Rox Hill, South Delridge, Highland Park, and White Center. The Delridge corridor is a critical study area both because of the high numbers of communities of color along the corridor and because it connects to North Delridge via a number of bus routes that are expected to feed into the proposed Delridge and Avalon stations.

- **Communities of color living along the Delridge corridor will likely access light rail by bus and other modes and transferring at the planned Avalon and Delridge light rail stations**

Populations of color in the North Delridge subarea are lower (32%) than for the city as a whole (34%). Mapping the data showed that higher concentrations of communities of color are found further south along the Delridge and 35<sup>th</sup> Ave SW corridors, specifically in the High Point (61%), South Delridge (57%), Highland Park (52%), and White Center (65%) neighborhoods. These communities are currently served by frequent bus routes that are planned for RapidRide upgrades in the near future, which will provide faster and more reliable service connecting to light rail at both Avalon and Delridge Stations. The Delridge station will also be the closest high capacity transit station to South Seattle College, where students of color account for 40% of the enrollment as of the 2017-2018 academic year.

## 4.2 Level 2 Alternatives

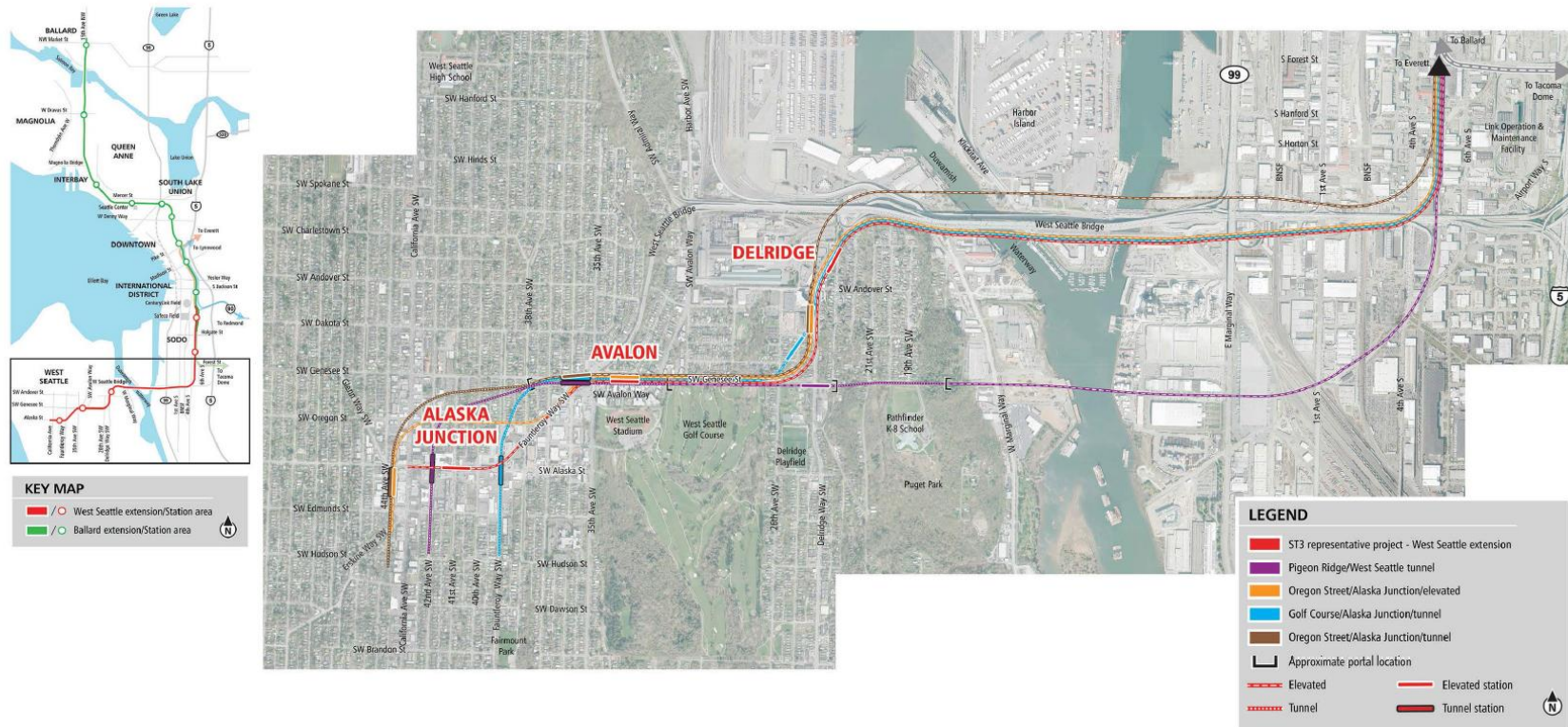


Figure 4-2 West Seattle/Duwamish Segment – Level 2 Alternatives

### 4.3 Level 2 Evaluation Summary

- In Delridge, the key drivers of differentiation between alternatives with respect to racial and social equity include bus-rail integration, opportunities for equitable development, residential unit displacements and business and commerce effects.
- *Alternatives that provide the best transfer environment from other modes would best serve communities of color living further south and reliant on transfers at the Delridge Station*
- Alternatives that result in more predictable redevelopment scenarios provide the highest potential for Equitable TOD

#### Overview

During Level 2, five alternatives were evaluated for the segment of the WSBLE project that includes a Duwamish crossing and Delridge, Avalon, and West Seattle Junction station locations. The alternatives were developed based on community feedback since the beginning of the year and direction from the WSBLE Stakeholder Advisory Group and Elected Leadership Group. These alternatives include five different station and alignment options located within the North Delridge neighborhood:

- (A) *ST3 Representative Project*, with a Duwamish crossing immediately south of the West Seattle Bridge, and an elevated Delridge station (~60') north of SW Andover St at Delridge Way SW
- (B) *Pigeon Ridge/West Seattle Tunnel* alternative, with a Duwamish crossing south of the West Seattle Bridge roughly aligned with SW Genesee St, and an elevated station (~30') set in the Puget Ridge hillside
- (C) *Oregon Street/Alaska Junction/Elevated*, with a Duwamish crossing immediately south of the West Seattle Bridge, and an elevated Delridge station (~80') just north of SW Dakota St on private property adjacent to Delridge Way SW west side
- (D) *Golf course/Alaska Junction/Tunnel*, with a Duwamish crossing immediately south of the West Seattle Bridge, and an elevated Delridge station (~30') set across private property between SW Dakota and Genesee Sts at 25<sup>th</sup> Ave SW
- (E) *Oregon Street/Alaska Junction/Tunnel*, with a Duwamish crossing immediately north of the West Seattle Bridge, and an elevated Delridge station (~60') just north of SW Dakota St on private property adjacent to Delridge Way SW west side

#### Bus-rail integration

The Delridge station will be a key intercept point for current and future high-capacity bus routes serving South Seattle College and the SW Delridge Way corridor, including the future RapidRide H line. Excellent and seamless transfers, coupled with efficient bus operations, are best realized with the *Pigeon Ridge/West Seattle Tunnel* alternative. This station spans Delridge Way SW and is one of the lower-elevation station options, resulting in a bus transfer that is highly visible, intuitive, and safe for all directions of travel. Enhancing wayfinding and reducing transfer times can help improve transit benefits accruing to communities of color who will likely access these stations by car, bus, or bike from the south.

The *ST3 Representative Project* performs the lowest. It is most distant from the heart of North



Delridge, and the location is near on-ramps to the West Seattle Bridge, providing a less hospitable transfer for all modes, including those arriving from further south in the Delridge corridor.

The *Golf Course/Alaska Junction/Tunnel*, *Oregon Street/Alaska Junction/Tunnel* and the *Oregon Street/Alaska Junction/Elevated* alternatives all perform moderately. Bus transfers are slightly more challenged than the *Pigeon Ridge/West Seattle Tunnel alternative*, as passenger transfers from northbound buses would need to cross Delridge Way SW in order to access the station. Both Oregon Street alternatives feature stations with higher platforms, which would increase transfer times. Additionally, in its current configuration, the Golf Course alternative station location requires slightly more distance (though less than 100 feet) traveled from the intersection to the station entry. These conditions could be alleviated by moving the station entry further east in a future design refinement, or exploring grade-separated pedestrian facilities. Not investing in intuitive wayfinding could extend transfer times and may diminish the benefit of the light rail service for communities of color transferring to these station locations. Lessons learned from the Mount Baker station are instructive for future station siting and access design schemes, in terms of conditions to avoid when designing for an optimized bus/rail transfer environment.

### ***Opportunities for Equitable Development***

The *Golf Course/Alaska Junction/Tunnel* alternative was viewed as having the highest potential to catalyze equitable development in the station area. This alternative would likely require a sizeable property taking, consisting mostly of single-family homes across a two-block area. The direct displacement outcomes would potentially be significant. However, substantial residual property would likely remain from station construction to facilitate development of possibly hundreds of affordable housing units near the station per Sound Transit's equitable transit-oriented development (ETOD) policy. Furthermore, this redevelopment scenario would involve a one time, predictable displacement event that could present clear outcomes in terms of public benefits provided on site. The urban design of the station area could also help to foster an integrated public realm that could encourage further development of neighborhood amenities and enhance access to opportunity. One such example could include a grocery store within an ETOD plan, which we have heard is a desired asset articulated by the Delridge community. An optimal ETOD outcome would help to transform impacts from station construction into a lasting benefit for the community, with an acknowledgement that inclusive engagement and thoughtful planning would be necessary to accomplish this (see the *for further consideration* section below).

The *Pigeon Ridge/West Seattle Tunnel* and *ST3 Representative Project* alternatives were viewed as having lower opportunities for equitable development due to their more limited footprint and physical site constraints. Both *Oregon Street/Alaska Junction* (elevated and tunnel) alternatives, have more property effects from the station footprint and guideway geometry that result in reduced development capacity and opportunities for affordable housing. These options could result in more piecemeal redevelopment scenarios undertaken by the private market, and occur over a longer timeline. In the absence of an inclusionary zoning policy, there would be less opportunity for a robust public benefit outcome that includes affordable housing and community-identified amenities.

### ***Residential unit and business displacements and construction impacts***

While the North Delridge community was not identified as one with a large percentage of minority and low-income communities, construction impacts and displacements in this neighborhood may still affect these communities and are therefore discussed below. As the projects progress and community outreach continues, we will learn more about the people that might be affected, specifically in the North Delridge neighborhood (see *for further consideration* section below).

Across the West Seattle segment, the *Oregon Street/Alaska Junction/Elevated* and *Tunnel* alternatives rated lower performing in residential displacements due to larger numbers of potential displacements compared to other alternatives, with over 145 potential displacements. Most displacements would occur in the Delridge neighborhood and around the Avalon and Alaska Junction stations. The *Oregon Street/Alaska Junction/Elevated* alternative also has higher business displacement.

While the *Pigeon Ridge/West Seattle Tunnel* also rated lower performing in residential displacements, these displacements would occur primarily around the Alaska Junction station.

Across the West Seattle segment, the *ST3 Representative Project* and the *Oregon/Alaska Junction/Elevated* alternatives rated lower performing for construction impacts due to the potential for visual and noise and vibration impacts to residences on or near Delridge Way SW, SW Genesee Street, and SW Alaska Street and the north edge of Pigeon Point.

The *Pigeon Ridge/West Seattle Tunnel* alternative would have the least construction impact to the Delridge and Pigeon Point neighborhoods.

## **4.4 Delridge Community Engagement and Input**

### **4.4.1 Community Engagement Events**

Sound Transit's community engagement in the Delridge neighborhood during Level 2 alternatives evaluation included the following events.

#### Briefings

- Drink and Link briefing at Ounces, 8/8/18
- Pigeon Point Neighborhood Council briefing, 6/11/18

#### Social Service Provider Interviews

- Neighborhood House at High Point, 7/26/18
- Southwest Youth and Family Services, 6/29/18
- West Seattle Food Bank, 6/28/18

#### Public Meetings

- West Seattle Open House/ Neighborhood Forum, 9/8/18

#### Festivals

- Delridge Day, 8/11/18

#### 4.4.2 Community Input

The following sections summarize the comments and themes that Sound Transit heard from the Delridge community during Level 2 outreach and community engagement.

- **Enhancing access to opportunity for communities of color would benefit from experiential improvements and educational efforts, together with increased transit service**

Low-income families from neighborhoods south of Delridge, many of whom are immigrants, refugees and people of color, rely heavily on public transportation to access services, jobs and schools. More frequent and improved bus service to a Delridge light rail station could benefit low-income populations and communities of color who live further south.

When the West Seattle extension comes online, many shared advice for how to better serve communities of color and low-income communities, noting that factors such as cost, payment method and presence of security and fare enforcement could be barriers. Additionally, we heard that education will be essential for many immigrant and refugee families that are new to the area and do not understand how local public transportation operates. Providing language-neutral wayfinding and signage, and announcements in languages other than English would improve accessibility for people who speak limited or no English.

- **Equitable development opportunities that benefit communities of color could assist in addressing displacement pressures and providing sorely needed neighborhood amenities**

We heard concerns about residential and business displacement and that increasingly residential development in the area is not affordable. Some expressed concerns that this may only continue to increase with light rail coming to the neighborhood.

Many shared interest in redevelopment occurring in the station area that includes affordable housing and neighborhood amenities, such as a grocery store.

## 5 QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION THROUGHOUT PROJECT PLANNING

As project planning continues, a number of questions related to race and social justice should continue to be explored, including the following:

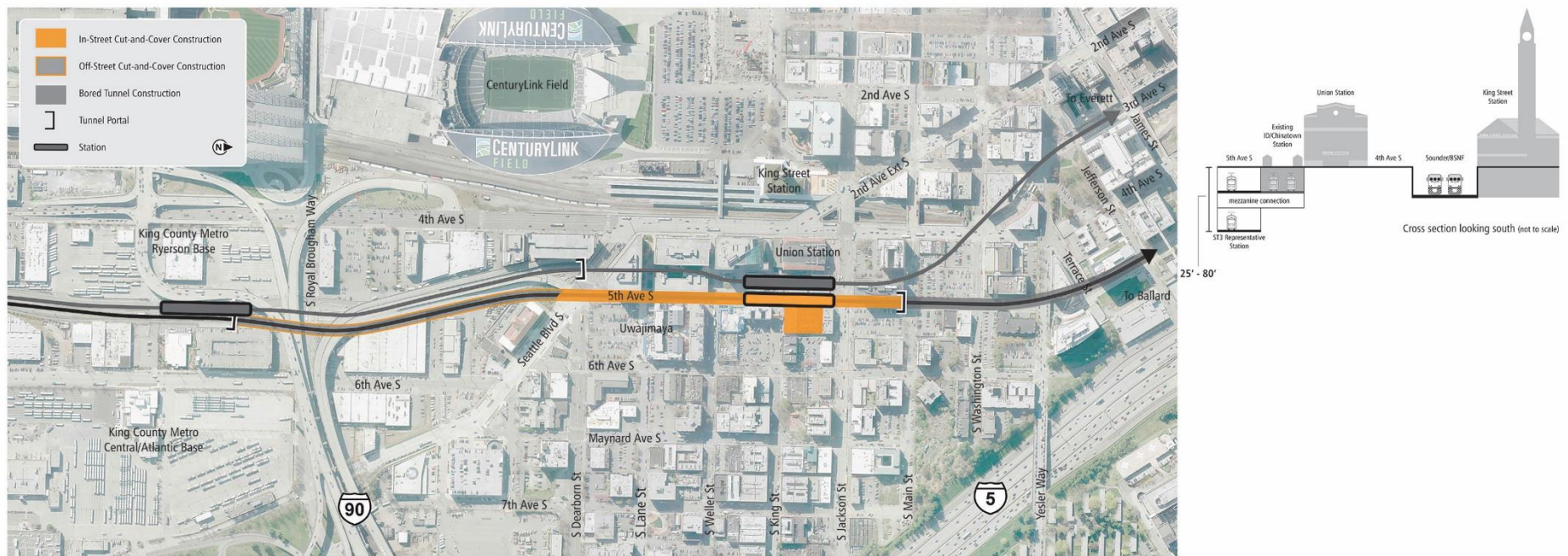
- Are there differences among the alternatives in terms of potential for direct and indirect displacement of CID community members? What role can cross-agency coordination play in addressing short-term, direct and long-term indirect displacements?
- What does “Access to Opportunity” mean for the CID community?
- Are there differences among the alternatives in terms of potential for residential and business displacements disproportionately affecting Delridge community members of color? This could also be asked across the entire project corridor as well.
- What role can ETOD play in increasing affordable housing near station areas and what are the opportunities and risks inherent in translating property acquisition to ETOD?



## Appendix A

### Chinatown/International District Segment – Level 2 Alternatives

- **5th Avenue Cut-and-Cover Tunnel / Cut-and-Cover Station (ST3 Representative Project, Surface E3, and Occidental Ave)**



*These visuals are based on limited conceptual design and intended to inform comparison of potential benefits and impacts between alternatives. Sound Transit will evaluate the potential effects of alternatives carried forward for environmental review in an Environmental Impact Statement.*

## ➤ 5th Avenue Bored Tunnel / Cut-and-Cover Station (Massachusetts Tunnel Portal)



*These visuals are based on limited conceptual design and intended to inform comparison of potential benefits and impacts between alternatives. Sound Transit will evaluate the potential effects of alternatives carried forward for environmental review in an Environmental Impact Statement.*

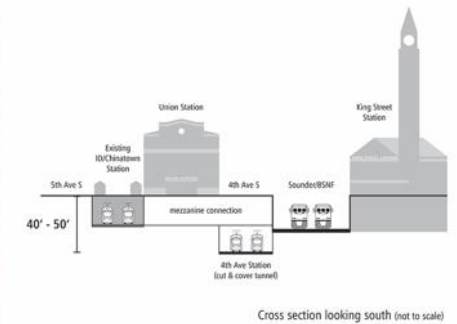
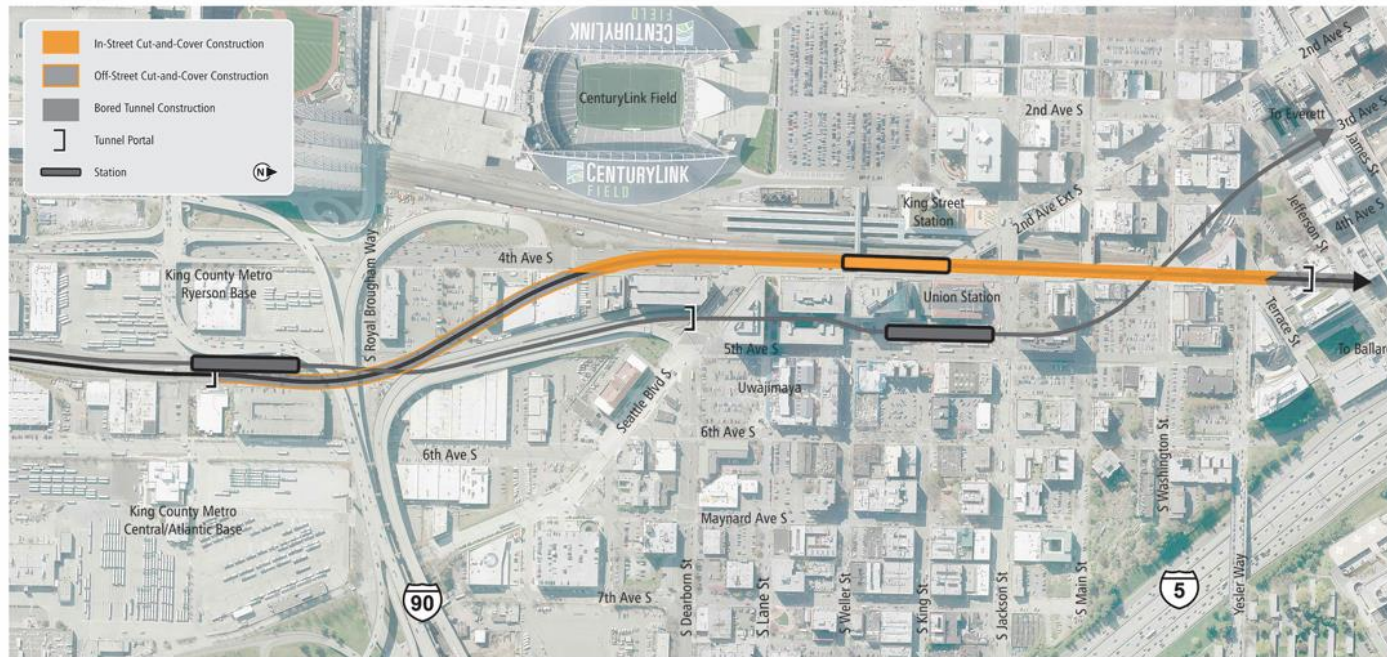


## ➤ 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bored Tunnel / Mined Station



*These visuals are based on limited conceptual design and intended to inform comparison of potential benefits and impacts between alternatives. Sound Transit will evaluate the potential effects of alternatives carried forward for environmental review in an Environmental Impact Statement.*

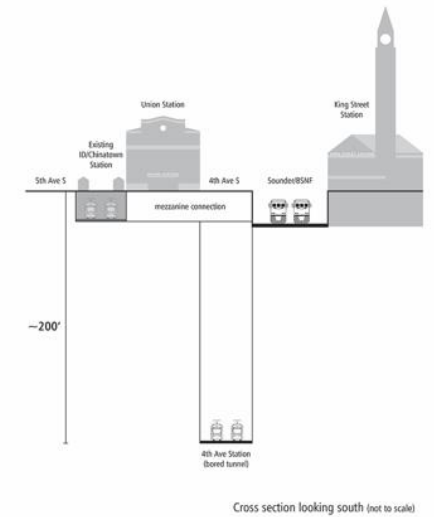
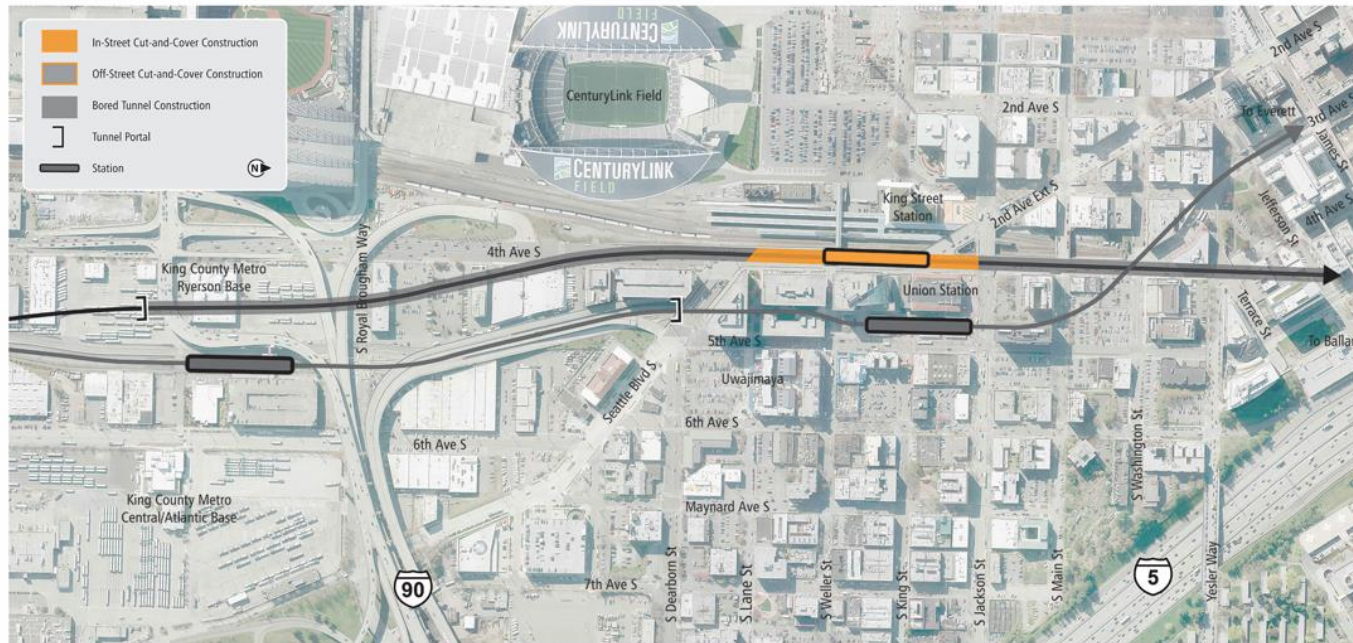
## ➤ 4th Avenue Cut-and-Cover Tunnel / Cut-and-Cover Station



*These visuals are based on limited conceptual design and intended to inform comparison of potential benefits and impacts between alternatives. Sound Transit will evaluate the potential effects of alternatives carried forward for environmental review in an Environmental Impact Statement.*



## ➤ 4th Avenue Bored Tunnel / Mined Station



*These visuals are based on limited conceptual design and intended to inform comparison of potential benefits and impacts between alternatives. Sound Transit will evaluate the potential effects of alternatives carried forward for environmental review in an Environmental Impact Statement.*