



Summary Minutes

System Expansion Committee Meeting February 9, 2023

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:~~35~~-10 p.m. by Committee Chair Balducci.

Roll call of members

Chair	Vice Chair
(P) Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember	(P) Kim Roscoe, Fife Mayor

Board Members	
(P) Nancy Backus, Auburn Mayor	(P) Kent Keel, University Place Councilmember
(P) David Baker, Kenmore Councilmember	(P) Joe McDermott, King County Councilmember
(P) Cassie Franklin, Everett Mayor	(P) Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive
(P) Bruce Harrell, Seattle Mayor	

Alejandro Monzon, Board Relations Specialist, announced that a quorum of the System Expansion Committee was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Monthly Contract Report and Agency Progress Report

The meeting packet included the monthly contract report and the November agency progress report.

Extended Meeting Time

Chair Balducci reminded everyone that this meeting has been extended from its usual schedule to accommodate the presentation on the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions further results. She also noted that a presentation on the community feedback on the further studies was scheduled to take place at the February 23, 2023 Board meeting, and that they survey to provide feedback was open and set to close on February 17, 2023.

Boardmember Eat Link test ride

Chair Balducci shared that Board members from the East King County subarea were able to join East Link project staff during a nighttime systems integrated testing ride. While she was unable to attend, the participating Board members rode from the Downtown Bellevue Station to the South Bellevue station via the tunnel. She highlighted this as an opportunity for Board members to see the work needed to get lines ready for service.

CEO Report

CEO Timm provided the report.

Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension

CEO Timm reported the City of Tacoma is continuing their work on the signal cabinets to support the remaining tests for the system's signalization and train movement monitoring. This work is expected to be completed later this month.

The project team is completing work on the Light Rail Vehicle communication system before sending the first Brookville vehicle out on the existing alignment to start a required 1000km "burn-in" before conditional acceptance. This work could start as early as this week.

She also reported that the agency is very close to announcing a window and then an official date for when the service will open.

Puyallup Sounder Station Garage

CEO Timm reported that the City's partnership and BNSF's collaboration have put us on track to open the garage in the next several weeks. The last two major items associated with the project include a required observation period associated with the installation of a new signal and the completion of our off-peak parking agreement with the City. Staff will keep the Board and riders informed as more details are available.

Stride Bus Rapid Transit

WSDOT issued the official notice to proceed for work on the Stride bus rapid transit project in Kirkland. The project will rebuild the NE 85th interchange on I-405 to provide an inline BRT station, local transit connections, improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and direct access to the I-405 Express Toll Lanes upon which Stride BRT will operate. This project is scheduled for delivery in 2026.

Operations & Maintenance Facility South

CEO Timm reported that part of the OMF-S project includes a small federal nexus as the test tracks are proposed to be located in the WSDOT right-of-way of I-5.

Sound Transit has been notified that changes in the application of federal NEPA rules last year will apply to this project and will require the Agency to complete a more robust federal environmental review. This required change may delay completion of the environmental review process by as much as two years and could affect the 2029 target opening date.

The OMF-S project is specifically needed to support the future Tacoma Dome and West Seattle Link Extension projects which are expected to open well after this date, as well as to provide additional systemwide vehicle storage and maintenance capacity.

Staff are working closely with Federal partners to look for opportunities to minimize delays and streamline the process wherever possible to prevent any potential impacts to the system or to future system extensions.

Ongoing updates on projects will be provided as they hit major milestones and as the Agency encounters opportunities, risks, or other significantly changed conditions associated with the delivery of our major capital projects.

Public comment

Chair Balducci announced that public comment would be accepted via email to meetingcomments@soundtransit.org and would also be accepted verbally.

Written public comments:

YK Zhou
Cause Huan

Michelle Miranda, Lisa Dixon Howard and Grant Wojahn for the Alliance for Pioneer Square, Miye Moriguchi, and Lunn Claudon
John Leer
Tom Lang, Cole Gleason, Scott Bonjukian, Trevor Reed, Vincent Slupski, and Bill Leedom
Martin Westerman
Kathleen Johnson for Historic South Downtown, Diane Le, Monisha Singh for the Chinatown International District Business Improvement Area, Ryan Smith, Barry Blanton, and Kelly Nomura for International Community Health Services
Colin Shinnars for the Vanbarton Group
Zach Johnson, Gary Reifel, and Savannah Myers
Alejandro
Daniel Cavasos
Joe Boomgard-Zagrodnik and Kim Schwarzkopf
Puget Sound Sage

In-person Verbal Public Comments:

Lisa Herbold
Mike Stewart
Kristie Kisbye
Mike Kahrs
Scott Ingham
Chris Woolward
Sheila Stikel
Roger Lorenze
Betty Lau
Paul Wu
Tim Lee
Brien Chow
Kathleen Johnson
Jared Jonson
Rick Hooper
Monisha Singh
Joe Reilly
Rebecca Castilleja
Rosalie Gaut

Virtual Verbal Public Comments:

Rochelle Herteg
Josh Simm
Nathan Rose
Benjamin Broesamle
Lara Zahaba
Johannes Heine
Jon Cracolici
Colleen Horn
Joe Kunzler
Gary Reifel
Alex Thompson
Alex Hudson

Business items

For Committee Final Action

Minutes: January 12, 2023 System Expansion Committee meeting

It was moved by Boardmember Baker, seconded by Boardmember Roscoe, and carried by unanimous voice vote that the minutes of the January 12, 2023 System Expansion Committee meeting be approved as presented.

For Recommendation to the Board

Motion No. M2023-14: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a Multi-Jurisdictional Partnering Agreement with the cities of Everett and Lynnwood, Snohomish County and Community Transit for the Everett Link Extension and Operations & Maintenance Facility North project.

Chair Balducci asked Eric Widstrand, North Corridor Development Director, to begin the staff presentation. The presentation also covered the following action and included information regarding the current status of the Everett Link Extension Scoping process.

Boardmember Somers thanked the staff for their work in the process and expressed hope that any remaining issues will be worked out.

Chair Balducci noted that there will be brief break after the committee's action on the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions before they turn their attention to the northern corridor and Everett Link.

Boardmember Constantine echoed Boardmember Somers's comment on working toward pushing forward on the Everett Link Extension, especially when reviewing the options for the Operations & Maintenance Facility North (OMF-N).

Boardmember Somers clarified a comment from the presentation regarding the multi-angled concerned on the OMF-N.

Boardmember McDermott inquired as to why budget ranges were included on the overall alignment but not on the individual stations. Mr. Widstrand responded that at this point, a minority of stations options have wide ranges on cost estimates, and cost is not a criterion for evaluation at this stage in the process.

Boardmember Keel noted his arrival during the first public comment and expressed excitement to hear the amount of detail going into the early planning for the Everett Link Extension. He also noted interest in uniform station design as a cost-control mechanism, per Triunity's recommendations.

Motion No. M2023-14 was moved by Boardmember Somers and seconded by Boardmember Baker with a do-pass recommendation.

Chair Balducci remarked that this may be the most jurisdictions she has seen included on the single partnering agreement and hoped for continued success in working with local partners through this evolution of practice.

Vice Chair Roscoe thanked the team for the detail included in their presentation.

Chair Balducci called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

David Baker
Bruce Harrell
Kent Keel
Joe McDermott
Kim Roscoe
Dave Somers
Claudia Balducci

Nays

It was carried by unanimous vote of the seven members present that Motion No. M2023-14 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Motion No. M2023-15: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute contract modifications with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. to a) provide additional project development services for Phase 1 of the Everett Link Extension and Operations and Maintenance Facility North project in the amount of \$1,175,600 and b) exercise the option for Phase 2 services in the amount \$68,401,479, with a 10 percent contingency of \$6,828,971 totaling \$75,230,450, for a new total authorized contract amount not to exceed \$93,212,897.

Eric Widstrand continued the staff presentation for this action.

Motion No. M2023-15 was moved by Boardmember Somers and seconded by Boardmember Baker with a do-pass recommendation.

Chair Balducci called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

David Baker
Bruce Harrell
Kent Keel
Joe McDermott
Kim Roscoe
Dave Somers
Claudia Balducci

Nays

It was carried by unanimous vote of the seven members present that Motion No. M2023-15 be forwarded to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

Reports to the Committee

West Seattle & Ballard Link Extensions Update

Chair Balducci asked Cathal Ridge, Executive Corridor Director, to provide the presentation.

Mr. Ridge began the presentation by highlight current cost and schedule risks associated with the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions. He noted that there are currently minimal cost concerns for the project but noted that both of the Extensions have experienced delays due to the direction to conduct further studies and community engagement. These delays to fully jumping into completely the Final Environmental Impact Statement have contributed to the current schedule risk, and further risks may be incurred based on the Board’s identification of a Preferred Alternative for the Ballard Link Extension.

Mr. Ridge briefly summarized that today’s deeper dive presentation will be followed by a presentation at the 2/23 Board of Directors meeting that will include a summary of the Community Feedback received on the project. Both of these presentations will set the stage for action to confirm the Preferred Alternative during the March System Expansion Committee and Board meetings. Today’s presentation would be focusing on the further studies along the Ballard Link Extension, which Mr. Ridge will walk

through segment-by-segment, as well as look at end-to-end scenarios of the possible alignment. Refinements on the West Seattle Link Extension will also be reviewed.

Mr. Ridge walked through four potential Ballard Link Extension alignment scenarios and highlighted key considerations and risks for each.

- Scenario B – CID 4th Shallow, Midtown 5th, Westlake (with entrance consolidation), Denny Westlake, SLU Harrison, Seattle Center/Republican West, Smith Cove Galer, Shifted Interbay Dravus, and Ballard 15th (cost savings) Stations. This scenario notes a potential schedule risk with the CID 4th Shallow station, an elevator-only accessible station at Midtown, and centralized access to CID, Pioneer Square, and other transit modes. The estimated cost is \$900 million over the Realigned Financial Plan.
- Scenario D – CID South, CID North, Westlake (with entrance consolidation), Denny Westlake, SLU Harrison, Seattle Center/Republican West, Smith Cove Galer, Shifted Interbay Dravus, Ballard 15th (cost savings) Stations. This scenario would replace the deep Midtown station with a shallower option at CID North, impact transfers from the 2 Line, increase equitable TOD potential, and avoid displacements in CID. The estimated cost is \$200 million over the Realigned Financial Plan.
- Scenario E - CID South, CID North, Westlake (with entrance consolidation), Denny Westlake, SLU Harrison, Seattle Center/Mercer, Interbay-Smith Cove Consolidated, Ballard 15th (cost savings) Stations. Mr. Ridge noted the main change for this opportunity is the ability to avoid park effects in along the Interbay and Seattle Center segments. The estimated cost is \$600 million over the Realigned Financial Plan.
- Scenario F - CID South, CID North, Westlake (with entrance consolidation), Denny Terry, SLU Harrison, Seattle Center/Republican West, Smith Cove Galer, Shifted Interbay Dravus, Ballard 15th (cost savings) Stations. Mr. Ridge highlighted a potential schedule risk with this alternative due to needing to relocate long-haul fiber infrastructure near Denny station. The estimated cost is \$400 million over the Realigned Financial Plan.

Mr. Ridge paused for Boardmember Discussion. Chair Balducci invited Boardmembers to ask questions.

Vice Chair Roscoe asked what “eTOD” stands for and inquired if the CID North and South stations are the only avenues to get a shallower station alternative in the Midtown area. Mr. Ridge answered that it stands for equitable Transit-Oriented Development”, and that the depth of the Midtown station is, in part, determined by the depth of the CID station along the Ballard extension.

Mr. Ridge began in the CID segment and reminded the Committee of the alternatives studied in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. He briefly recapped the Board direction to conduct further studies and highlighted the months of public engagement that have accompanied these studies.

Refinements to the 4th Avenue Shallow (CID-1a) option were based on the goals of maximizing community benefits while minimizing costs and impacts to the CID. Displacements at ICON apartments can be reduced from 4 years to two 2-month periods, impacts to BNSF can be reduced but would also lengthen the construction duration by one year, partial closure on 4th Avenue can be reduced by one year, and a range of strategies are possible to reduction noise and air quality construction effects. Mr. Ridge then showed the Refined 4th Avenue Shallow option in context with a Midtown station and the transfer potential between the three planned Link Lines. He also showed station layout designs showing the potential entrance near the Weller Street Pedestrian Bridge, as well as those on the south end of Union Station. This station option is estimated to provide transfer times of 2 minutes and 20 seconds to the existing CID station southbound platform, 4 minutes to the existing CID station northbound platform, and 4 minutes and 10 seconds to the Sounder platform.

Mr. Ridge then discussed the 4th Ave Shallower station option. This would reduce the station depth to about 45’ deep from the previous 80’ in the shallow option. This option would also the planned tunnel to

run above the existing Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, which would allow a shallower Midtown station as well.

Vice Chair Roscoe asked if the CID North or South options would also result in the shallower Midtown station. Chair Balducci noted that as these designs have shifted over time, that may have been the case in a previous report but also highlighted that a CID North station would replace the Midtown station option. Mr. Ridge also noted the choice between a CID North and Midtown station, and stated that they will see the CID North station design shortly in the presentation.

Chair Balducci inquired about the transfer potential for rider coming on the 2 Line from East King County. Mr. Ridge answered that a graphic is coming-up in the presentation to help answer the question.

In addition to the station along 4th Avenue, these options allow for opportunities in the surrounding community, including a potential lid with park space, Sounder access, and space for activities; plaza activation around Union Station to bring community member together; activation of Union Station as an entrance for the station; creation of a well-lit pedestrian connection to and across 4th Avenue; improvement of neighborhood linkage with green connection/festival street; and improve local intersections to facilitate pedestrian connection to Pioneer Square.

Mr. Ridge also walked through the street closures that would occur on 4th Avenue with the station options. Years 1-2 of construction would require closing Northbound 4th Avenue from Jackson Street south to the I-90 ramps. Year 4-5 would see the same but on the Southbound side of 4th Avenue. Years 6-9 would see a full closure of 4th Avenue north of Jackson Street until Yesler Street.

Mr. Ridge now moved to the CID North station option. This option emerged from the public engagement process. This alternative would consolidate the Midtown and CID stations and enable transfers with the existing Pioneer Square station. This design would displace King County Administration buildings and surrounding social service providers, while also creating eTOD potential. Temporary closures of James Street between 3rd and 4th Avenues over a period of 4 years would be necessary. This option would be integrated with the Madison BRT line, and offers a 10 minute walk to CID, Pioneer Square, Colman Dick, and the south end of Downtown/Midtown. The estimated cost is \$360 million under the Realigned Financial Plan.

Mr. Ridge noted the potential for a slight decrease in expected ridership, as well as the estimated transfer time between Link Lines and the overall station depth has a reduced range when compared to the Midtown option.

Chair Balducci asked how that depth compares to the current Pioneer Square station. Mr. Ridge estimated the current station to be at the 60-80' depth range. Chair Balducci asked for clarification if that is the system's standard design with a mezzanine. Mr. Ridge confirmed he believes that is the case.

Boardmember McDermott asked about the transfer quality between a CID North station and the current Pioneer Square station. Mr. Ridge noted that the next slide is about to cover that information.

Mr. Ridge showed a station design that would allow for connections to take place underground, beneath 3rd and 4th Avenues. The average transfer time between Link Lines would be 3 minutes and 15 seconds, while transferring to Sounder would require 12 minutes.

Boardmember Constantine asked for assistance in understanding the orientation of the graphic showing the underground connection between the stations.

Boardmember Baker asked if the graphic is depicting elevators in the underground transfer connection. Mr. Ridge noted that elevators are included in the design, along with stairs/escalators.

Mr. Ridge explained that the difference in transfer time for a Westbound 2 Line passenger to the Southbound 1 Line would be 3 to 3.5 minutes if the CID North station were constructed over a 4th Avenue station option.

Boardmember Constantine inquired if a transfer time penalty is also incurred when arriving to CID from East King County, or vice versa. Mr. Ridge clarified that the 2 Line will be stopping at the existing CID station, so no penalty is incurred on that trip.

Chair Balducci asked for clarification on the transfer design between the existing Pioneer Square station and the potential CID North option, as there is a steep hill between the planned points. Mr. Ridge clarified that the transfer would take place underground in this situation.

Chair Balducci noted that keeping the transfer underground may help negate any additional transfer penalties to potential riders who could get misoriented if an above ground transfer was required.

Mr. Ridge noted several construction effects for this station option, including displacement of the King County Administration building and surrounding social services, opportunity for a station entrance at undeveloped property both of the Courthouse building, and potential relocation of trolley wire buses from James Street to a nearby corridor. He also noted the timeframe for construction is 6-7 years.

Chair Balducci noted for Boardmember Constantine and Harrell that this option would replace the skybridge.

The CID North Station option would require closure of James Street between 3rd and 4th Avenues to construct the underground transfer connection, while there is some potential to reduce those closures by acquiring private property to build below. Mr. Ridge highlighted that there were opportunities to collaborate with King County on their downtown campus planning, create additional connections across I-5 to Harborview Medical Center, improve connections to CID and the station hub along 4th Avenue, and offer eTOD sites.

Boardmember Harrell noted that much of his analysis is best understood as understanding the differences presented by the CID North and South option in comparison to the 4th Avenue Shallow option. He also explained his metric of impacting public safety by way of major capital infrastructure projects. Mr. Ridge briefly explained the graphic showing the planned construction workspace for the CID North option and noted that the final station would only exist in the cross-hatched section, leaving the rest for potential redevelopment.

Mr. Ridge highlighted several more opportunities presented by this option, including improving the Pioneer Square station entrance and connection to improve public safety, develop a multi-level station entrance serving Yesler Way and 4th Avenue, and add additional entrances at City Hall and City Hall Park.

Mr. Ridge now moved to the CID South station option. This option also emerged from the public engagement process. This alternative would place a station in CID just south of the Uwajimaya parking lot. This would offer 10-minute walks to the existing CID station and the Stadiums and provide eTOD potential. While providing limited traffic impacts, this option would not accommodate direct transfers between Link Lines. This option does not involve consolidation with the potential Midtown station.

Boardmember Constantine asked about the transfer experience from the CID South option to the existing Stadium station. Mr. Ridge noted that he has an upcoming graphic to help him articulate that transfer.

In a CID South + Midtown station alternative, the stations would sit at 95-115' and 140-145' deep, respectively.

Chair Balducci asked about the transfer from the 2 Line to the 1 Line trains in this situation. Mr. Ridge explained that this option would require the transfer to occur at the Westlake station.

Using a graphic of the design layout, Mr. Ridge highlighted the potential entrances/exits of the station, showing travel times and paths to the existing Sounder, CID, and Stadium stations.

Showing the station construction and staging area, Mr. Ridge noted that this would need to be coordinated with any future development plans and that Sound Transit would need to work with local agencies in regard to existing and planned utility infrastructure. Construction on this station would take 5-6 years.

Opportunities provided by this option include constructing a pedestrian bridge over BNSF railway for Sounder access, planning a station entrance closer to CID with new public space, reconfiguring street plans, developing eTOD in the area, activating a pedestrian route connecting stations and public spaces, and improving connections to the Stadiums.

Mr. Ridge reviewed the option to build both a CID North and CID South station. He noted this option has many of the pros and cons associated with the individual stations. The estimated cost is \$160 million over the Realigned Financial Plan. He also briefly noted the tunnel boring construction area required for each station.

Mr. Ridge also spoke to concepts around activating Union Station and the surrounding plaza to help address public safety concerns in the CID. Most of these concepts revolve around updating the paving and lighting throughout the plaza and using space within Union Station for community events.

Vice Chair Roscoe asked about the location of Hing Hay Park in proximity to the Link system. She also asked for additional clarification on the station depth discussion, including the projected costs for vertical conveyances and their upkeep. Mr. Ridge noted that he is unable to answer that at this time but would get back to Vice Chair Roscoe.

Boardmember Harrell inquired as to what additional community engagement is planned prior to reaching a decision on the Preferred Alternative for the Ballard Link Extension. Mr. Ridge noted that if a non-DEIS option were selected as the Preferred Alternative, the team would need to complete a substantial amount of work to bring the selected option up to the detail of previously studied options, and that would include additional community outreach as part of the Final EIS process. Boardmember Harrell asked what would go into the Final EIS process. Mr. Ridge noted that it would require additional environmental work, and that the decision to select the Project to Built would occur after the FEIS is published.

Boardmember Keel thanked the team for the trove of information being provided in this presentation. He also expressed interest in the effort and work needed to complete the FEIS after the Board selects a Preferred Alternative and re-iterated his cautious optimism that the Board can decide in March.

Boardmember McDermott asked if there were any known further delays that could be caused by selecting a non-DEIS option as the Preferred Alternative. He noted that this decision will also include potential refinements along the entire Ballard Link Extension alignment, and any of those refinements may require additional environmental work that will take time.

Boardmember McDermott also inquired into the community reception of the CID North and South options, given the support heard for 4th Avenue during Public Comment. Mr. Ridge noted that the CID North and South option were drafted as a result of the increased community engagement, and that which option has more support at Board or Committee Public Comment sessions may vary based on the meeting. Mr. Ridge did remind the Boardmember of the public feedback summary that would be a part of the presentation planned for the February Board meeting.

Don Billen, Planning, Environmental, and Project Development Executive Director, elaborated on Mr. Ridge answer to Boardmember McDermott's question on overall schedule impact. He added that while Mr. Ridge only spoke to the Environmental review process, there could also be construction timeline impacts with any changes.

Chair Balducci partially quoted Motion No. M2022-57 which gave the direction for these further studies and noted that the staff had completed every task asked for in the Motion. She also asked for a side-by-side comparison of the different options along the alignment.

Chair Balducci expressed concern with the CID South only option due to its inadequate transfer potential for passengers coming from East King County. She also asked for comparisons between both the 4th Avenue Shallow and Shallower station option against the other options.

Chair Balducci deferred to other members on knowing of additional work that could be associated with one option or another but asked if there were any known plans for contemporaneous repairs/replacements of local infrastructure that could partner with Sound Transit's construction timelines.

She also supported the activation of Union Station regardless of the station option selected. She hopes that Sound Transit will partner with local community leaders to make that effort successful. She asked for Mr. Ridge to continue with presentation.

Mr. Ridge began reviewing the further studies in the Downtown segment, and he noted both the South Lake Union and Seattle Center station options play into a mix-and-match opportunity for the alignment. He also touched on station entrance refinements in this segment that may shift station entrances from private property into public Right-of-Way.

For the Midtown Station (DT-1), the team is looking at a potential entrance refinement to shift the entrance into public Right-of-Way on Columbia Street which would permanently narrow the street with minimal traffic effects. These refinements could reduce potential modifications to the existing building and could add escalator access to improve the passenger experience. The estimated cost is \$30 million over the Realigned Financial Plan.

An additional entrance refinement in the public Right-of-Way along 4th Avenue is also being studied at the Midtown Station. These refinements would temporarily reduce 4th Avenue to one lane during construction with major traffic effects, and permanently reduce 4th Avenue to two lanes thereafter. The estimated cost is \$20 million under the Realigned Financial Plan.

Mr. Ridge spoke to the idea of consolidating new station entrances at the planned Westlake station, given the integration of planned and existing stations. These changes would eliminate the need to close 4th Avenue, displace fewer businesses, provides opportunity for integrated joint development, and add redundancy with vertical circulation. He added that the DEIS design for the planned Westlake station included 3 entrances, which would add to five entrances of the existing station. The refinements would eliminate two of the entrance headhouses and required additional property acquisition for the 1 consolidated headhouse with multiple entrances and development potential.

In the South Lake Union area, Mr. Ridge described the mix-and-match alternative of connecting the Westlake/5th, Denny/Terry, and South Lake Union/Harrison station options. This option would avoid temporary shutdown to the Seattle streetcar but could present potential schedule issues due to high-risk relocation of long-haul fiber infrastructure. The estimated cost is \$200 million over the Realigned Financial Plan.

Elaborating on the Denny/Terry station option, Mr. Ridge noted that a key issue was creating access to the south side of Denny Way. Further studies have revealed a potential option to construct an entrance in the public Right-of-Way south of Denny way, which would shorten pedestrian access to additional transit infrastructure on Westlake Avenue. Another option is to construct an entrance along Lenora Street, which would reduce future development risk and permanently close Lenora Street with minimal traffic effects. A final option under consideration is to construct an entrance along 8th Ave, which would also reduce development risks and permanently narrow 8th Ave with minimal traffic effects.

Jumping to the Seattle Center Area, Mr. Ridge displayed a mix-and-match option to connect the South Lake Union/Harrison station, Seattle Center/Mercer Station, and either north Tunnel portal option. The mix-and match would not be practical to operate with the southern tunnel portal option. This alignment alternative would reduce the effects to Climate Pledge Arena and surrounding area in response to comments from the DEIS. Noise and vibration effects are expected to Settle Opera, King FM, and McCaw Hall, but these can be mitigated through operations. This option would result in 39 additional displacements and require the partial closure of Mercer Street, when compared to the 5th/Harrison station option. The South Lake Union/Harrison and Seattle Center/Mercer station options would be connected via tunnel. Mr. Ridge explained that while operational mitigations can reduce long-term noise and sound effects, the tunnel-boring process would be unavoidable but only last a handful of days in any given area.

An additional station option places the Seattle Center station on Republican Street, further west than previously studied. While this would also avoid direct impacts to Climate Pledge Arena, it would introduce noise and vibration effects to Uptown Cinema which could be mitigated during operations, but not during construction.

Vice Chair Roscoe asked what Uptown Cinema is and its relation to the surrounding area. Mr. Ridge answered that it is associated with the Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF) organization and noted that SIFF owns two potentially impacted cinemas in the area – Northwest Rooms and Uptown Cinema.

Vice Chair Roscoe also asked for clarification on the noise and vibration effects caused by the Tunnel Boring Machine and those associated with other construction. Mr. Ridge noted that the Boring Machine is what will cause most of the construction-related effects, and that subsequent construction work within the tunnel should not be disruptive.

Chair Balducci noted that she would be forwarding staff comments and questions she has received regarding utility and transit infrastructure impacts among the different station and alignment options.

Boardmember Keel expressed a similar sentiment on the inevitability of encountering utility impacts on the project and asked for additional information regarding the impact on the long-haul fiber relocation when possible.

Boardmember Harrell expressed concurrence on the reception of comments and questions from constituents regarding utility impacts.

Chair Balducci asked Mr. Ridge to continue onto the next portion of the presentation.

Mr. Ridge moved to the Smith Cove-Interbay segment. In the Further Studies, the team developed a Modified SIB-1 Alignment which would shift the Interbay station south to straddle below Dravus Street in order to avoid impacts to Seattle City Light and Seattle Storm properties. This option would add a station entrance to both sides of Dravus Street, result in 20 fewer displacements, and see temporary closures of Dravus Street for 1.5 years. The estimated cost is \$30 million under the Realigned Financial Plan. Additional studies included developing transit and pedestrian connections in the area.

An additional alignment was studied as Modified SIB-3, which would shift the tunnel portal further south and shift the Smith Cove station north of Magnolia Bridge. While attempting to solve for unstable slope risks on the Queen Anne hillside, the alternative was deemed unfeasible due to the location of the tunnel portal.

A consolidated Smith Cove-Interbay station option was also considered. This option would help avoid the unstable slope risk and avoid guideway concerns along Elliott Ave. The estimated cost is \$210 million over the Realigned Financial Plan.

Vice Chair Roscoe asked if these station option include parking garages. Mr. Ridge answer that they do not.

Chair Balducci noted personal unfamiliarity with this area of the alignment but referenced a public comment regarding the tunnel length and asked for more information. Mr. Ridge explained the comment was in regards to the consolidated Smith Cove-Interbay station option, as the shortened tunnel would avoid the hillside risks but also warrant the station consolidation.

Chair Balducci announced that the Contingency Management briefing scheduled for today's meeting will be postponed, and the committee will briefly review the Draft 2023 Work Plan to wrap-up the meeting.

Mr. Ridge began the Ballard segment portion by framing the further studies around cost savings opportunities. For the Tunnel 15th Ave station option, the team studied eliminating the south entrance and reducing the size of the east entrance. These refinements would reduce the overall construction staging area and avoid displacement of the Safeway store, but also reduce opportunities for eTOD. The estimated cost is \$210 million over the Realigned Financial Plan, which is an improvement over the DEIS estimates. Further reductions in size to the west entrance could saving an addition \$40 million.

Mr. Ridge elaborated on another option that would construct the station fully within the public Right-of-Way along 15th Avenue, as well as eliminate the south entrance. While property acquisition costs were lowered, additional detailing costs presented a similar outcome to the previous refinements but included partial closures of 15th Avenue NW during construction.

Additional studies were conducted on improving pedestrian access across 15th Avenue with a Tunnel 14th Avenue Station. Options include at-grade and separated grade options, with at-grade improvement being less costly but not reduce passenger-vehicle interactions.

Boardmember Keel inquired into the potential capacity impacts posed by reducing and eliminating entrances to the Ballard station. Mr. Ridge answered that the real issue with future capacity is in the idea to also reduce the west entrance, which the team flagged as a potential issue for future expansion. Boardmember Keel agreed that the west entrance reduction seems like a short-term solution to cost-savings that may be a long-term hinderance.

Chair Balducci asked for comparable pictures from our current system to help demonstrate these entrance refinements.

On the West Seattle Link Extension, Mr. Ridge noted that Board action was taken on the Preferred Alternative in July 2022 but touched on continued studies along the alignment.

Frist, the team is studying a station access refinement for the Alaska Junction Station that would shift the entrance to 42nd Avenue SW. Doing so would eliminate the need for a pedestrian crossing of 41st Ave. SW, create 90 additional eTOD units, and displace fewer residential but additional business properties. The estimated cost is \$80 million over the Realigned Financial Plan.

From the Delridge station, the team is studying an access, integration, and alignment refinement to shift the alignment south towards SW Yancy Street. This refinement would eliminate potential passenger and freight conflicts, have fewer residential but additional business displacements, and reduce impacts to community services, including Transitional Resources. It would result in the permanent closure of 32nd Avenue SW. The estimated cost is \$50 million over the Realigned Financial Plan.

Mr. Ridge noted that while the refinement avoids the main building used by Transitional Resources for administration, it would still impact one building that offers 5 beds.

Studies have been conducted into the elimination of the Andover station option and optimize the alignment. This would reduce much of the construction related impacts to roadways and properties, without a decreased in projected ridership. The estimated cost is \$80 million under the Realigned Financial Plan.

As an update from previous presentation, Mr. Ridge reported that further studies and refinements to enhance access from the planned SODO station platform to S Lander Street and reduce impacts to adjacent businesses have been successful.

Mr. Ridge briefly showed a potential alignment for the West Seattle Link Extension assuming the inclusion of those refinements.

Boardmember Harrel thanked the staff for their work in refining the design of the stations and alignment to reduce impact to Transition Resources and provide eTOD potential in West Seattle.

Vice Chair Roscoe asked if there were continuing concerns from business along the water way on the West Seattle alignment. Mr. Ridge said he can't recall but could return with information. Chair Balducci noted discussions are occurring around the Ballard Link Extension water crossing, but that the Port of Seattle had concerns along the West Seattle Link Extension. Vice Chair Roscoe rephrased her question if the concerns of the Port are still ongoing. Don Billen explained that their main concern was position the Link alignment north of the current West Seattle Bridge.

Boardmember McDermott asked Mr. Ridge to return to slides 113-114 on the Alaska Junction station to walk through the designs, noting the North-South orientation was adjusted between slides. He asked for clarification on the entrance locations.

Chair Balducci asked if slides 124-125 were simply summaries of the options and alternatives discussed and if Mr. Ridge could jump to the next steps portion of the presentation. Mr. Ridge briefly walked through the comparison slides for context.

Chair Balducci asked if Boardmember have any requests for additional information at this time.

Boardmember Keel stated that he will take the slides and information presented and reach out to staff after taking addition time to review the data.

Boardmember McDermott noted the importance of seeing the results of the Community Feedback Survey, particularly the comments from the CID.

Boardmember Harrell expressed hope that staff will be able to put together a Preferred Alternative for the Ballard Link Extension for consideration by the Board next month.

Chair Balducci re-iterated Boardmember Harrell's desire on the recommended action that comes from staff in March.

Boardmember Harrell expressed the key cultural area that the CID is in Seattle. He hopes to have a positive impact with the Board's tough decision.

Boardmember Constantine thanked the Committee and staff for their work in parsing out the decisions that exist along the Ballard Link Extension and is positive about the position the Board is in information-wise to make a decision.

Final Review of Draft 2023 System Expansion Work Plan

Chair Balducci briefly explained that the Committee Work Plan is a living document and even after a final review today, Boardmembers should feel free to recommend additional topics of interest throughout the year. She also summarized the key decisions that will be coming to the System Expansion Committee regarding Alignment alternatives, projects to be built, and baseline budgets.

She noted the Contingency Briefing scheduled for today was a carry-over item from last year, and summarized the special topics identified by staff and her additions.

Vice Chair Roscoe asked to add a presentation on uniform station design.

Executive session - None.

Other business - None.

Next meeting

Thursday, March 9, 2023
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. ****NOTE EXTENDED TIME****
Ruth Fisher Board Room &
Virtually via WebEx

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

ATTEST:

Claudia Balducci
System Expansion Committee Chair

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on March 9, 2023, AJM.