

Ballard Link Extension

*Feasibility study of potential new
alternative in South Lake Union*

Board meeting

05/23/2024



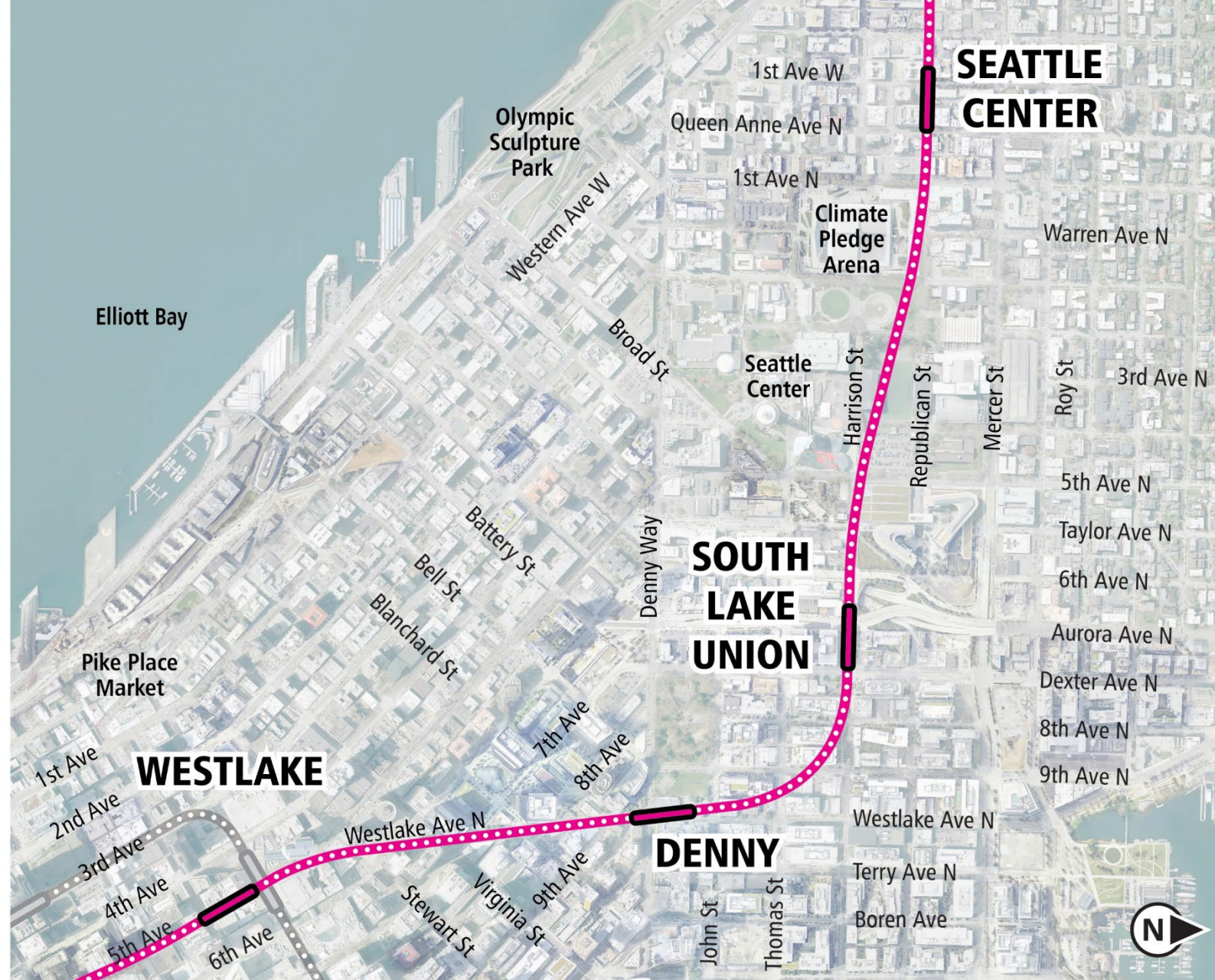
Why we're here today

Motion No. M2023-109 – approved in December 2023

Directing staff to assess the feasibility of an additional alternative in the South Lake Union area for potential inclusion in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Ballard Link Extension

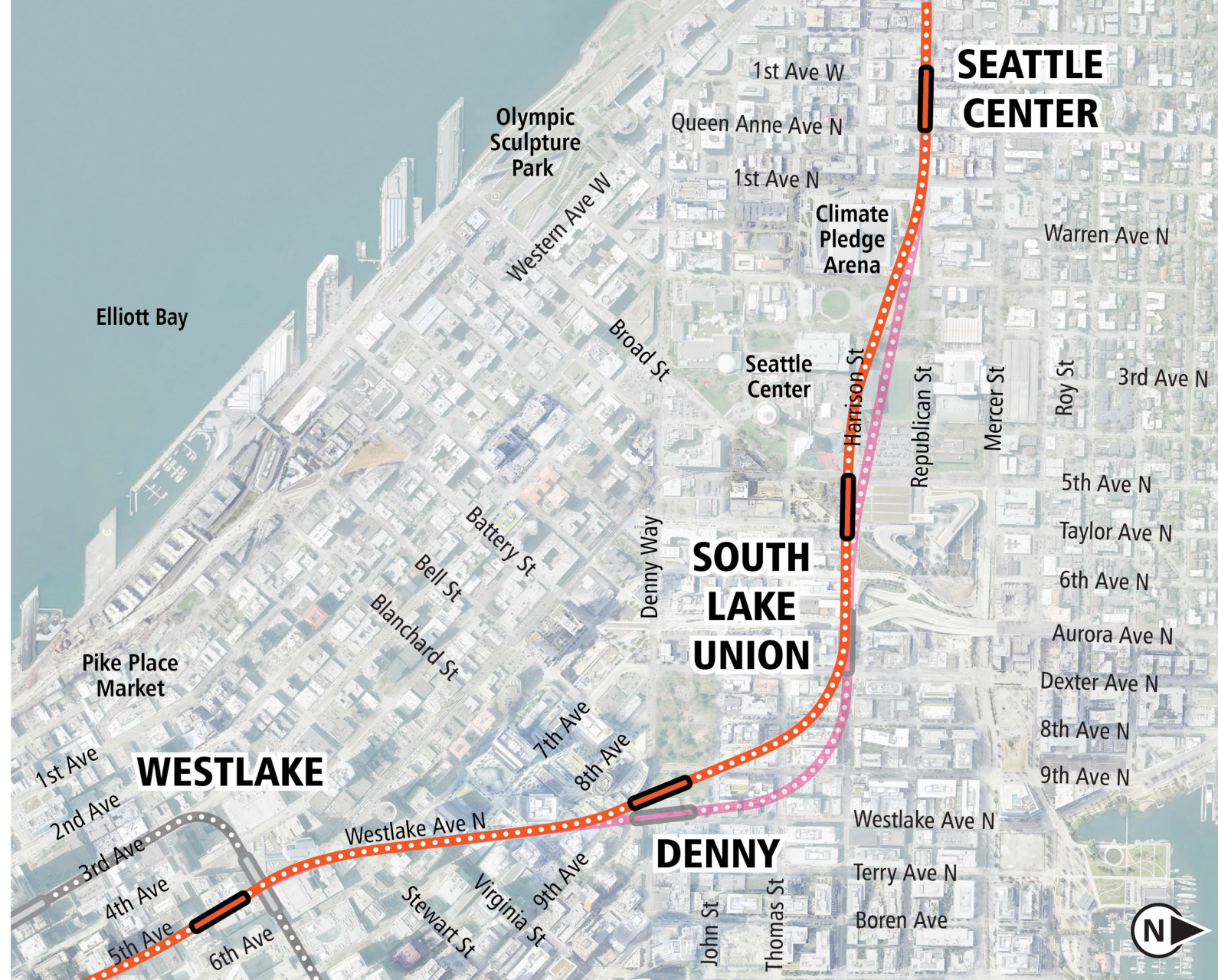
Current preferred alternative

Current preferred alternative identified by the Board in July 2023

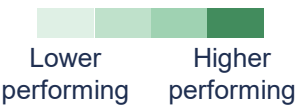


Potential new alternative

Potential new alternative identified for feasibility study in December 2023



Results comparison



Current preferred alternative

Potential new alternative

	Denny Shifted North and SLU 7th/Harrison	Denny Shifted West and SLU 5th/Harrison
Performance <i>Ridership/Transit Integration/Equity</i>	<p>Convenient transfer to bus routes on Harrison St and 7th Ave E Line serving communities of color and low-income populations along the SR 99 corridor</p> <p>2% higher ridership (~3,000 more trips per day)</p> <p>More convenient access to SLU core</p> <p>Denny station depth: 90 ft, SLU station depth: 110 ft (both stations facilitate stair, escalator and elevator access)</p>	<p>Convenient transfer to bus routes on Harrison St. Two-block transfer to 7th Ave E Line (3-5 min walk).</p> <p>More convenient access to Seattle Center</p> <p>Denny station depth: 100 ft, SLU station depth: 130 ft (both stations facilitate stair, escalator and elevator access)</p>
System Implications	No delay to opening of BLE; does not affect other Link extension projects	Delays opening of BLE; results in trains operating through existing downtown tunnel – which will be constrained in capacity – for a longer period, and results in trains from West Seattle operating longer as a shuttle to SODO
Construction effects <i>Street closures</i>	<p>Closure of transit lanes on Westlake Ave for ~3 years; streetcar closed for ~8 years</p> <p>Harrison St closed from 6th to 7th Ave and from 7th to Dexter Ave; maintain local access via decking/phased construction</p> <p>Reduced number lanes on Denny Way for ~3 years</p>	<p>Avoids closures on Westlake Ave; reduces number of lanes on 5th Ave for ~8.5 years</p> <p>Harrison St closed between 5th Ave and Taylor Ave; maintain local access (MoPOP, 5th Ave garage) via decking/phased construction</p> <p>Reduced number of lanes on Denny Way for ~1 year</p>
Utilities	Major electrical utilities on Harrison St, but fits within overall project schedule	Less intensive electrical utilities on Harrison St; avoids utilities on Westlake Ave
Noise and vibration	Potential noise and vibration effects to NW Rooms during tunnel construction	<p>Potential noise and vibration effects to NW Rooms during tunnel construction</p> <p>Potential effects to MoPOP during station and tunnel construction</p>



Current preferred alternative

Potential new alternative

Denny Shifted North and SLU 7th/Harrison

Denny Shifted West and SLU 5th/Harrison

Cost and schedule
Cost

Similar construction costs for both options (~\$60M more than finance plan)*

Similar construction costs for both options (~\$90M more than finance plan)

5th/Harrison would add some cost due to additional work associated with environmental review, PE, Admin, etc. costs (~\$25M)

Main cost implication will be escalation from EIS delay associated with adding new alternative (~\$500M in year of expenditure dollars)

Schedule

No delay to current project timeline

Reduces complexity of Denny station construction but overall project construction not faster because driven by the duration to tunnel from Queen Anne to SODO

Delay associated with environmental review/PE for new alternative potentially adds 10 months to 2 years to overall project schedule depending on if/when it is identified as preferred alternative

Risk

Hazardous materials risk

Potential property development risk (Block 48)

Potentially higher hazardous materials risk

Additional potential property development risk (Block 48, 9th/John, 9th/Thomas)

**Cost differential updated since prior further studies effort*

Community feedback

Engagement snapshot

December 2023 – May 7, 2024



40+ briefings

engaging community members, property owners, businesses, and organizations



Online survey with 1400+ responses



2 community webinars

engaging approx 50 participants



6 email updates engaging 12K+ subscribers



Social media campaign with 13K+ impressions



320 posters

distributed in and around the SLU and Denny communities

Current preferred alternative

Potential new alternative

Denny Shifted North and SLU 7th/Harrison

Denny Shifted West and SLU 5th/Harrison

Performance

*Ridership/Transit
Integration/Equity*

Interest in better transfers, higher ridership, shallower stations

Interest in more convenient access to SLU

Some interest in more convenient access to Seattle Center

System Implications

Broad interest in avoiding regional system effects

Construction effects

*Street closures,
Utilities, Noise and
Vibration*

Concerns about effects to traffic and pedestrian realm during construction and utility relocation, particularly along Westlake Ave

Concerns with construction disruption impacting the vitality of SLU commercial core

Interest in avoiding effects to traffic and pedestrian realm during construction, particularly along Westlake Ave

Concerns about traffic (particularly during events), pedestrian access and noise and vibration effects to Seattle Center during construction

Cost and schedule

Broad interest in limiting delays and cost increases

Staff recommendation

Staff recommendation

Recommendation

Take **No Action**, maintain the current preferred alternative, and not carry the potential new alternative into environmental review

Rationale

- Current preferred alternative and potential new alternative are **reasonably comparable** from a technical perspective
- Potential new alternative **would delay delivery** of Ballard Link Extension by 10 months to 2 years, would add approx. \$500M to \$1B, and have overall system implications

Thank you.



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