

# ***Ballard Link Extension***

*NEPA Scoping*

*System Expansion Committee*

*2/13/2025*



# *Why we're here today*

- Provide an update on National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Scoping for Ballard Link Extension.
- Scoping feedback does not indicate a need to add any new alternatives to the Ballard Link Extension Draft EIS that is currently in progress.

*No action today*

# ***Ballard Link Extension – Upcoming Milestones***

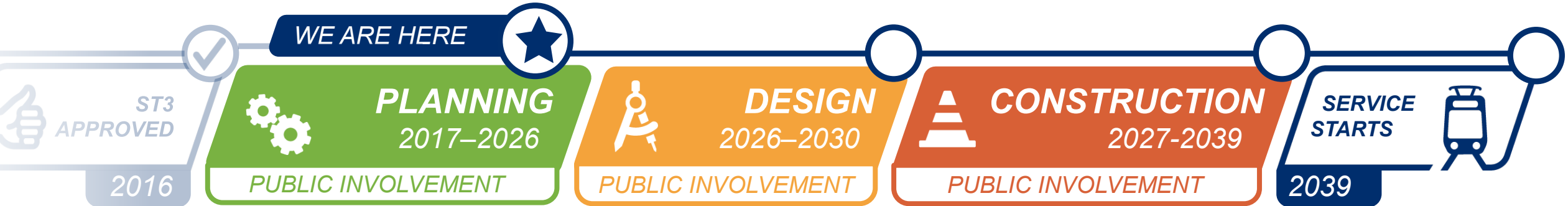
- Oct 10 (SEC): Briefing on NEPA Scoping
- Oct 24 to Dec 9: NEPA Scoping / Public comment period
- **Feb 13 (SEC): Briefing on conclusion of NEPA Scoping**
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- Late-2026: Final EIS; Selection of Project to be Built; and Record of Decision



# ***Ballard Link Extension***

- ✓ Included in Sound Transit 3 (ST3) voter approved plan.
- ✓ Adds nearly eight miles of light rail service, including a new light rail-only downtown tunnel.
- ✓ Includes nine new stations from Chinatown-International District to Ballard.

# Ballard Link Extension project timeline





ST3  
APPROVED

2016



# PLANNING



DES

## 2017–2023

### Alternatives development

- ✓ 2018: Early scoping
- ✓ 2019: Scoping
- ✓ 2019: Board identifies preferred alternatives and other alternatives

### Environmental review

- ✓ 2022: Publish WSBLE Draft EIS
- ✓ 2023: Board confirms or modifies preferred alternatives



## 2024–2026

### Environmental review

#### 2024: NEPA Scoping

#### 2025: Publish BLE Draft EIS

Public comment period

Board confirms or modifies preferred alternatives

#### 2026: Publish BLE Final EIS

Board selects project to be built

Federal Record of Decision

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

# *Why did we conduct scoping?*

This year, Sound Transit will publish a **Ballard Link Extension Draft EIS** that builds upon the 2022 West Seattle and Ballard Link Extension Draft EIS with analysis of new alternatives and project refinements.

The first stage in this process was to hold a Scoping comment period to collect public feedback. **Comments received during this scoping period build upon all past comments received on the project since planning began in 2017.** These comments will be carried forward in the Ballard Link Extension Draft EIS.

# External engagement snapshot – BLE scoping comment period 10/24-12/9



166 Scoping comments



9,600+ Online visitors to our online open house



2 Public scoping meetings with 179 attendees



10 Community briefings and property owner meetings



Earned media from 4 publications



6 Email updates engaging 12,200+ subscribers and a blog post engaging 4,300+ subscribers



Ads featured in 5 digital publications



Posts on Facebook with 24 engagements



Informational materials translated into 4 languages



# External engagement snapshot – BLE scoping comment period 10/24-12/9



9 Court reporter comments



101 Online open house comments



54 Email comments



2 Written comments

**166 Total Scoping Comments**



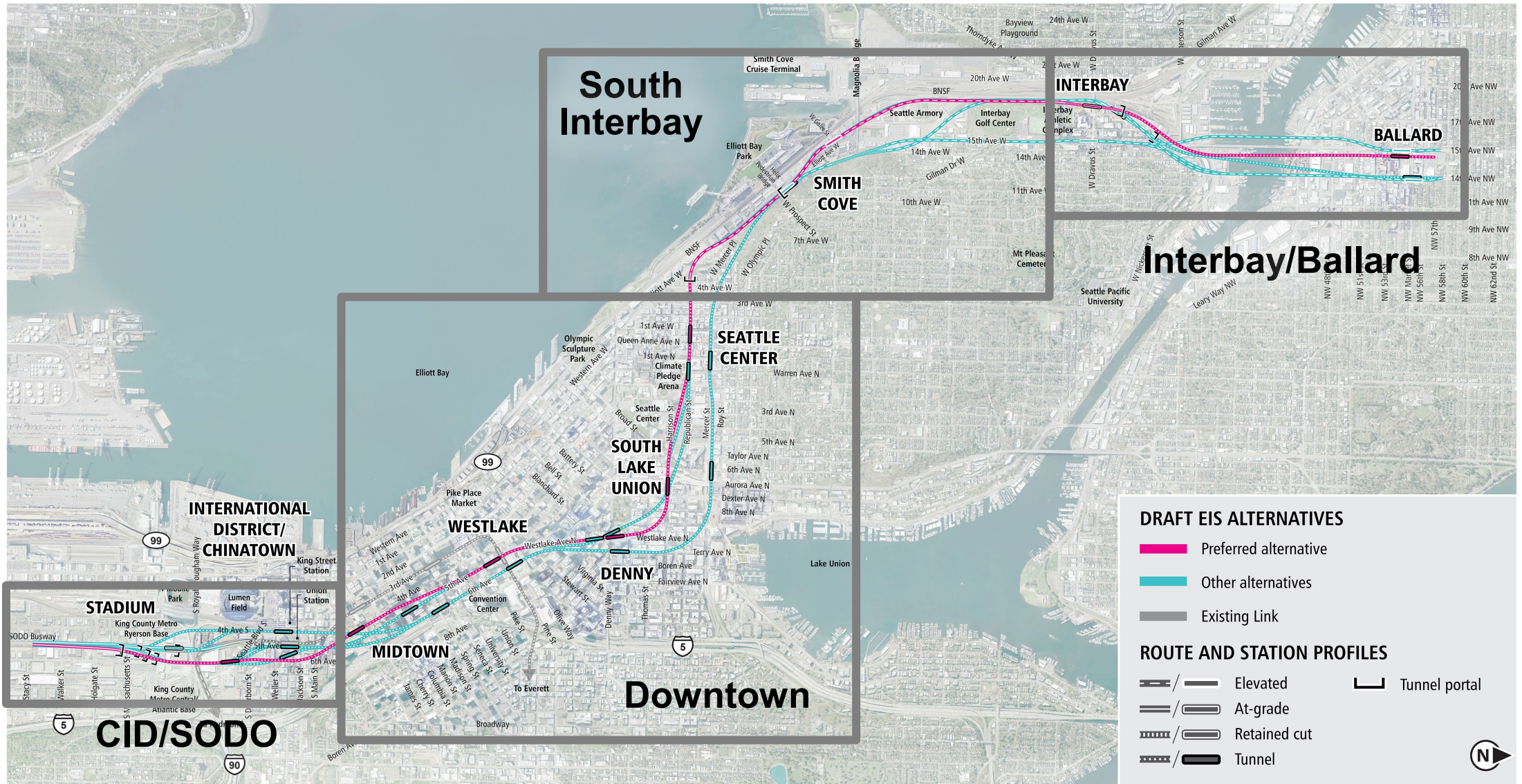
# Ballard Link Extension alternatives

- Preferred alternative
- Other EIS alternatives





# Draft EIS alternatives – Ballard Link Extension






# Scoping Feedback Overall

- Support for regional transit and for building the project as quickly as possible and avoiding delays.
- Support for building the project right to effectively serve the region for generations.
- Support for tunnel alignments where possible.
- Interest in providing effective multimodal access at stations, prioritizing below ground station transfers, and transit-oriented development
- Concerns related to property acquisitions and construction effects on homes and businesses.
- Interest in an extended 90-day public comment period when the Draft EIS is released.








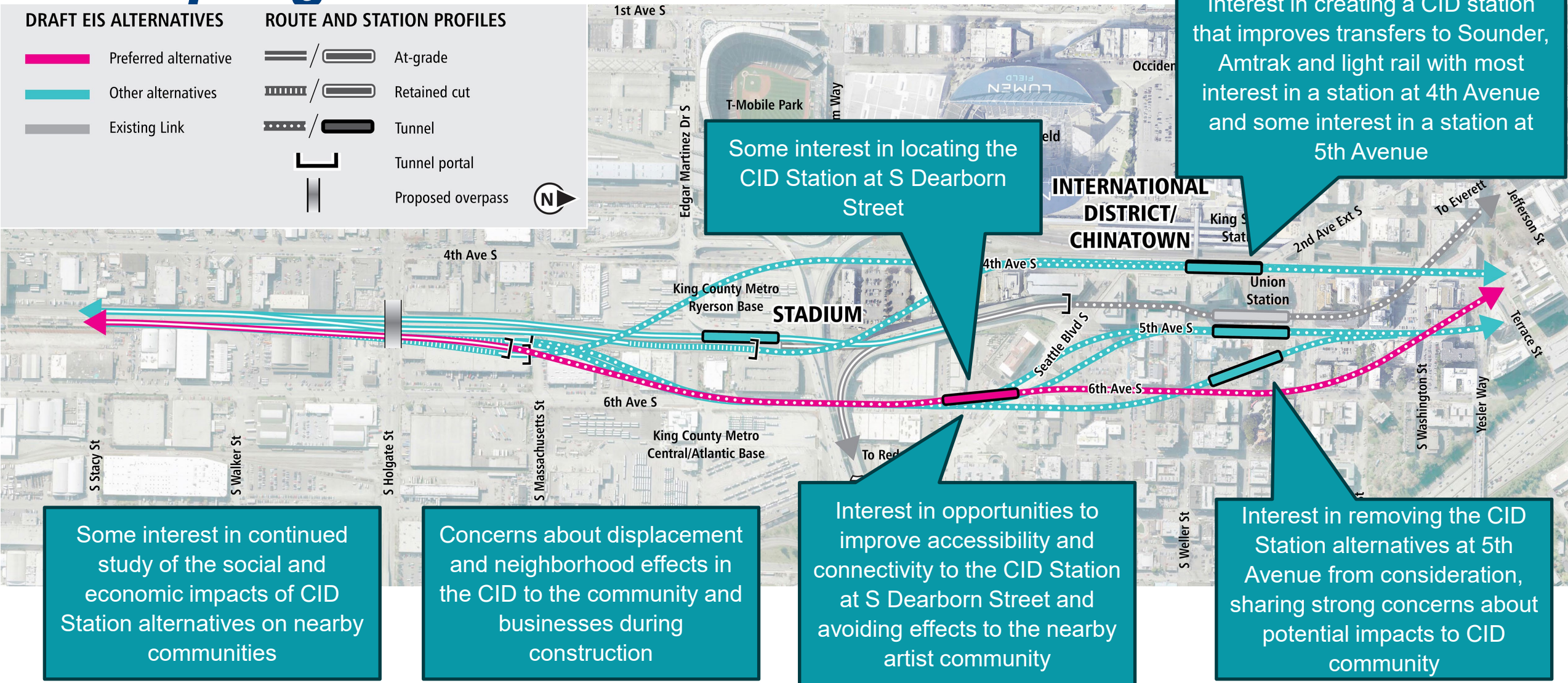
# Scoping Feedback CID/SODO

## DRAFT EIS ALTERNATIVES

-  Preferred alternative
-  Other alternatives
-  Existing Link

## ROUTE AND STATION PROFILES

-  At-grade
-  Retained cut
-  Tunnel
-  Tunnel portal
-  Proposed overpass



Some interest in locating the CID Station at S Dearborn Street

Interest in creating a CID station that improves transfers to Sounder, Amtrak and light rail with most interest in a station at 4th Avenue and some interest in a station at 5th Avenue

Some interest in continued study of the social and economic impacts of CID Station alternatives on nearby communities

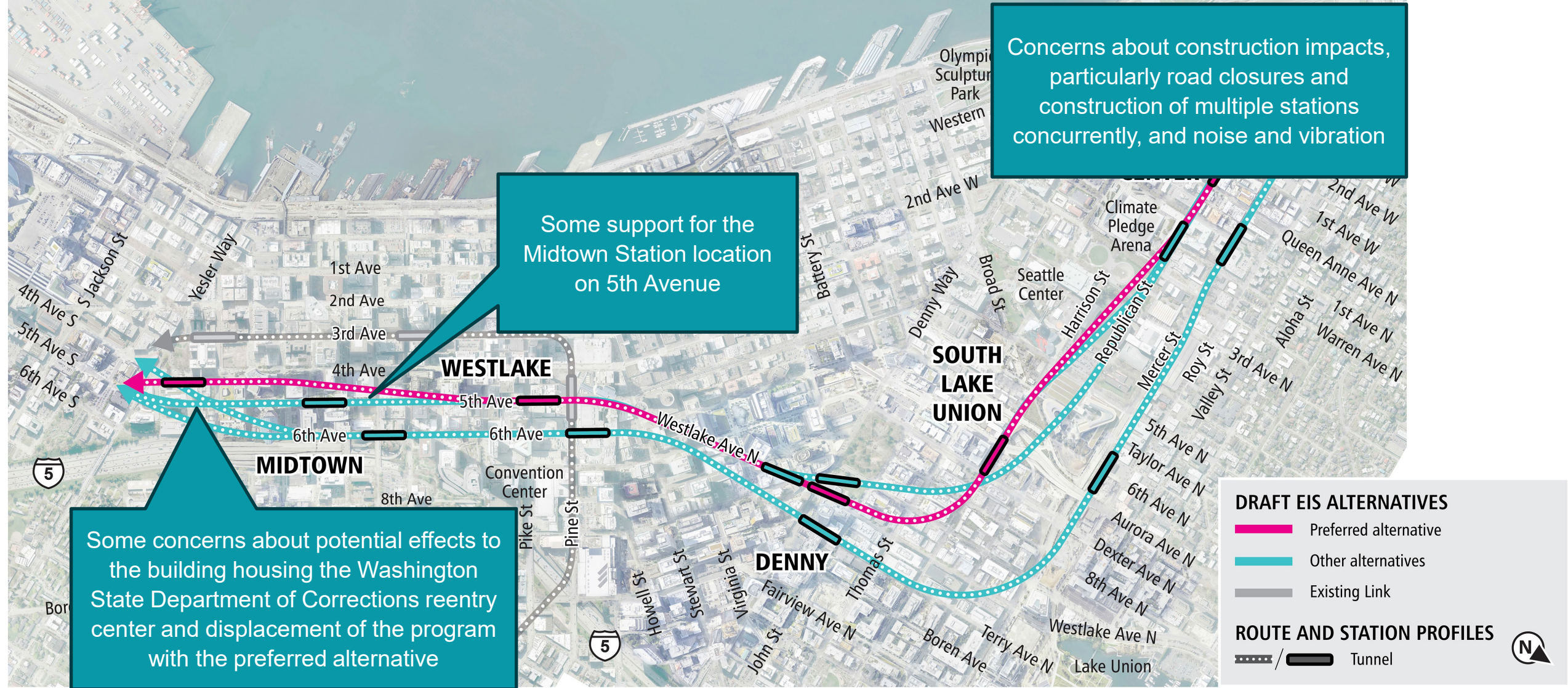
Concerns about displacement and neighborhood effects in the CID to the community and businesses during construction

Interest in opportunities to improve accessibility and connectivity to the CID Station at S Dearborn Street and avoiding effects to the nearby artist community

Interest in removing the CID Station alternatives at 5th Avenue from consideration, sharing strong concerns about potential impacts to CID community

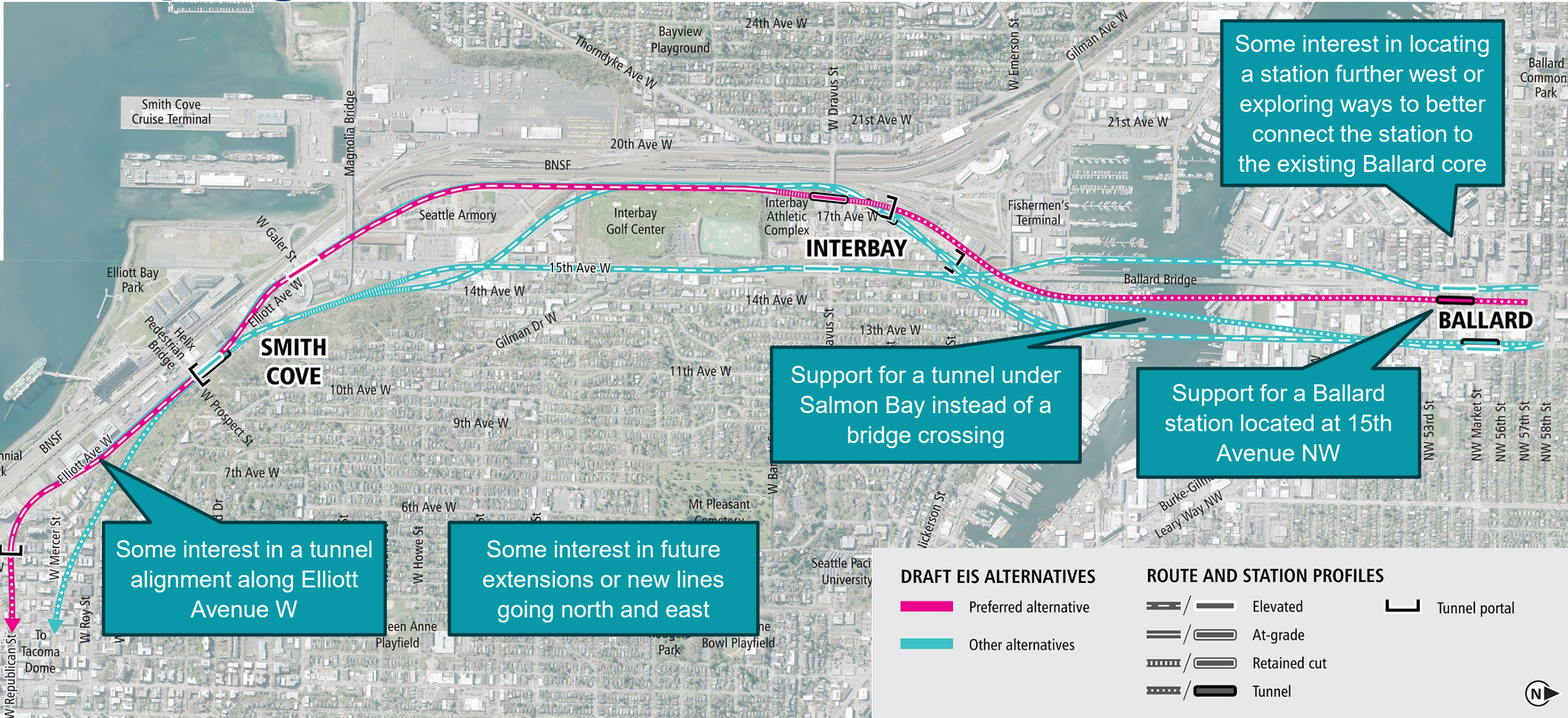


# Scoping Feedback Downtown





# Scoping Feedback South Interbay & Interbay/Ballard





# *Summary and Next Steps*

The Ballard Link Extension Draft EIS has a reasonable range of alternatives as guided by prior Board actions (Motion Nos. M2023-18 and M2023-57). **Scoping feedback does not indicate a need to add any new alternatives.**

Staff will move forward toward completion and publication of the Ballard Link Extension Draft EIS and will return to the Board with a summary of Draft EIS findings later this year.



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*Thank you.*



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