

Planning for Light Rail- Trees

Urban Forestry Commission

Nov. 13, 2024

Goals of Presentation

- Introduce the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extension projects and timeline
- Daylight City and Sound Transit's work to create a Tree and Vegetation Management Plan
- Discuss content and approval process for the tree plan
- Provide an opportunity for discussion



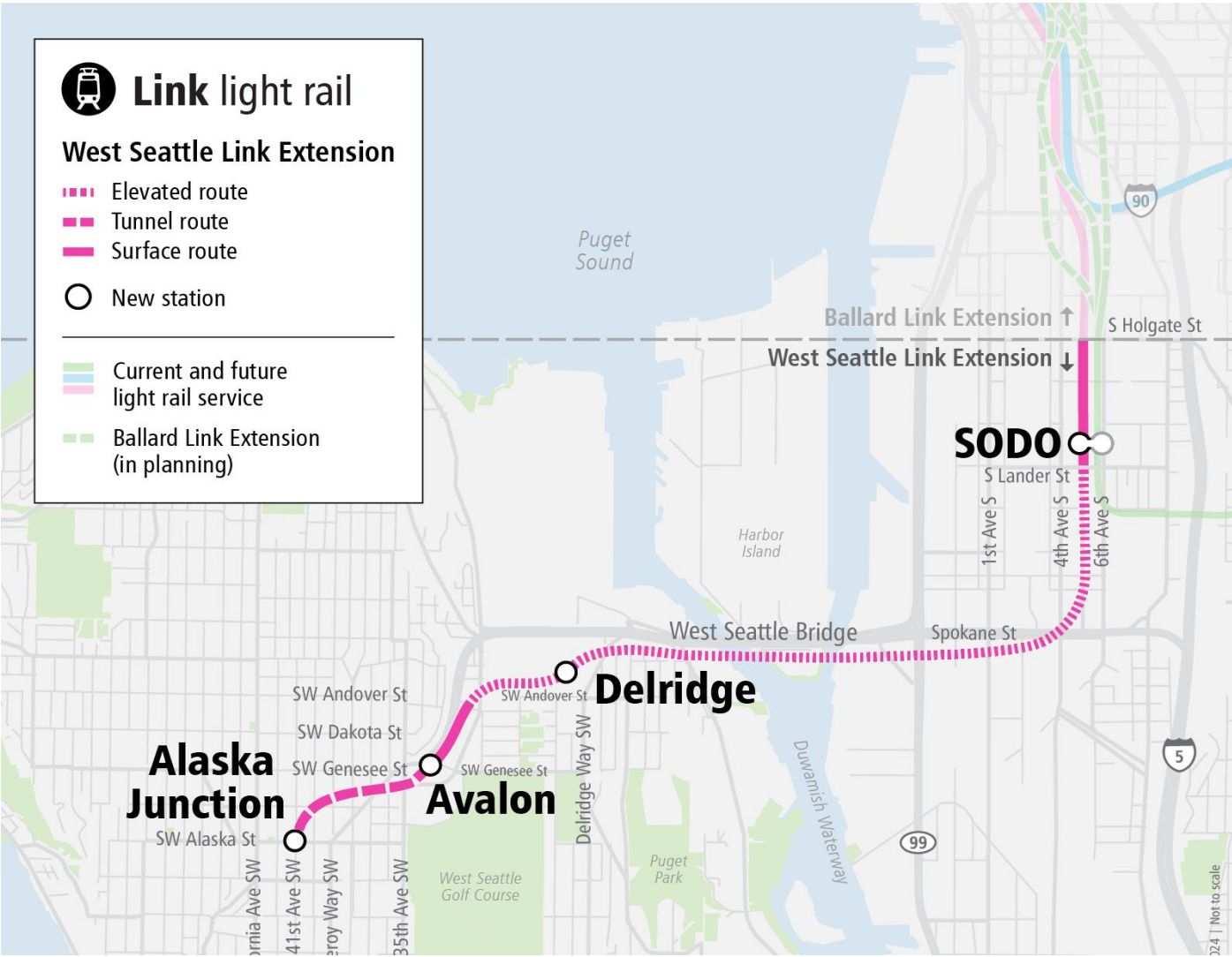
West Seattle Link and Ballard Link Extensions

Link light rail

West Seattle Link Extension

- Elevated route
- Tunnel route
- Surface route
- New station

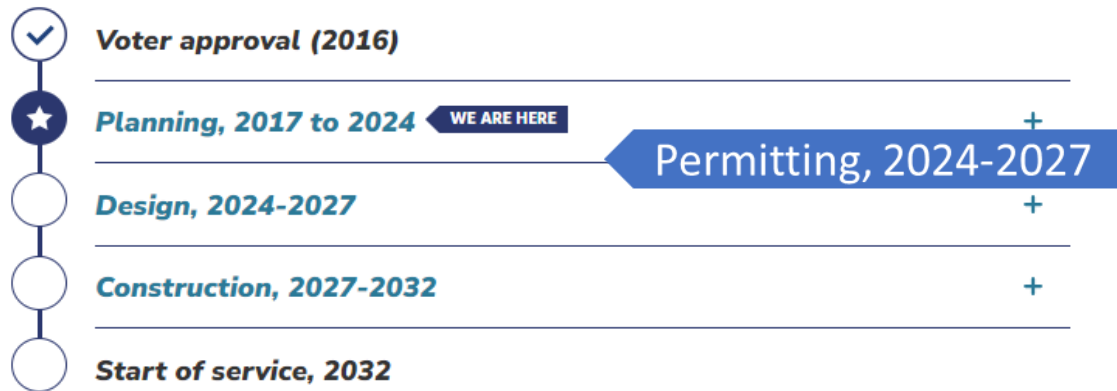
- Current and future light rail service
- Ballard Link Extension (in planning)





West Seattle Link

Timeline and milestones



Ballard Link

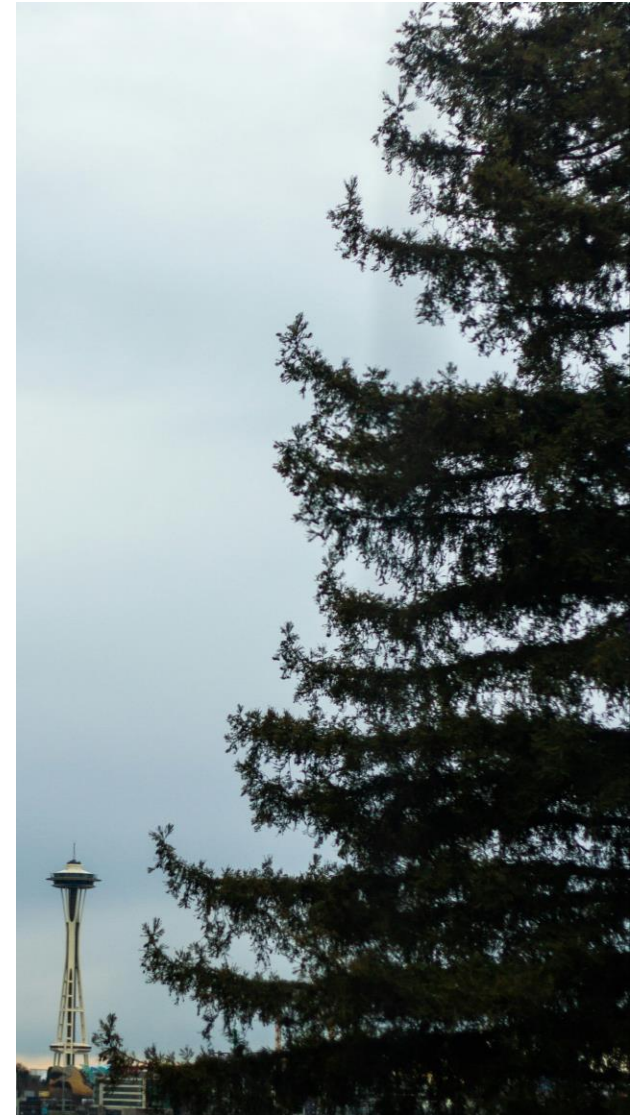
Timeline and milestones



We need to plan for trees

City of Seattle and Sound Transit have a shared goal to create project-level tree and vegetation management plans (TVMP)

- Address tree protection and replacement at a project-level
- Account for trees across different property types
- Provide consolidated info about tree management for the public
- Streamline permitting, saving time and money



Benefits to Light Rail Projects

Sound Transit is developing the Tree and Vegetation Management Plan to:

- Provide a holistic strategy for tree and vegetation management
- Allow trees to be planted over a larger area
- Engage with key stakeholders in advance of permitting
- Define clear requirements
- Increase efficiencies and remove risk



Light Rail Construction Across Seattle

13 stations and 12 miles of light rail track will cross multiple property types.

- Along streets and within parks
 - Including Pigeon Point and Interbay parks
- Within Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs) and Shorelines
 - Including Pigeon Point, Longfellow Creek, Duwamish Waterway
- On parcels without ECAs and Shorelines
 - Private property used for staging and guideways



A Plan for Each Link Extension



Sound Transit **will create a plan for each link extension** describing the project's impacts and tree replacement approaches per established City policy:

- Restore ecological function in environmentally-sensitive locations
- Replace lost tree canopy and create new tree canopy
- Replace trees lost from City property with a minimum of 3:1
- Locate trees in high-opportunity areas, such as along public streets, within parks

What Will Be in the Plan?

The plan will focus on trees impacted and replaced by Sound Transit within the project footprint:

The plan(s) will include:

1. A preliminary **inventory and map of trees** to be protected and replaced
2. Documentation of proposed **protection methods** for trees retained
3. Description of the proposed **tree mitigation**
4. **Best management practices** to be used during construction
5. Site **restoration requirements**
6. Tree and vegetation management practices **post-construction**
7. **Strategy for tree replacement that cannot fit in the project footprint**

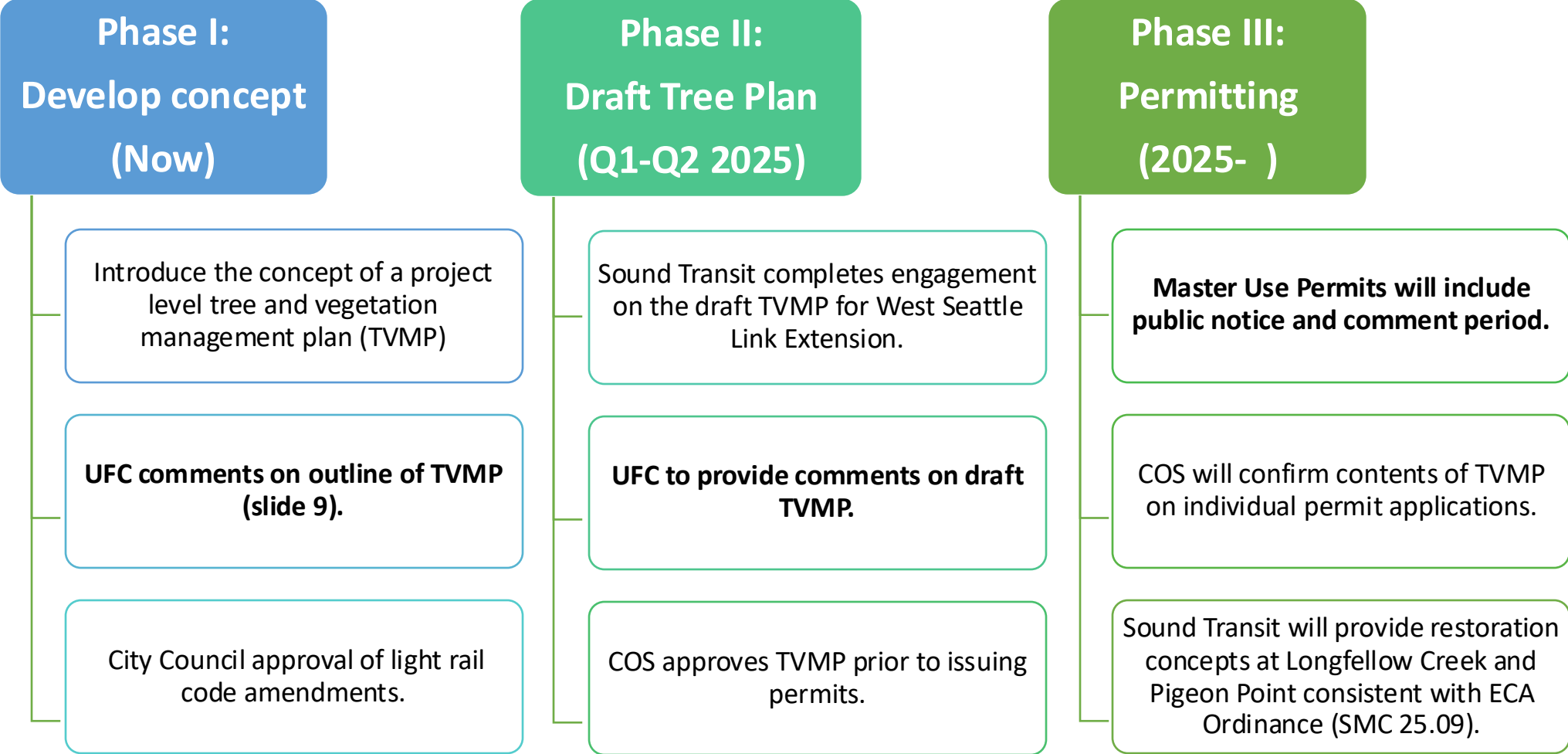
Developing the Tree & Vegetation Management Plan



The Tree & Vegetation Management Plan:

- Provides an inventory of trees
- Details how Sound Transit is minimizing impacts to trees
- Shows how replacement trees will be incorporated into the preliminary engineering plans
- The draft plan is scheduled to be ready for review Q1 2025.

Phases of TVMP



What if replacement trees cannot fit on light rail construction sites?

- Trees that cannot be replaced by Sound Transit in the project footprint will be replaced in coordination with City of Seattle.
- These plans will also create a more equitable tree canopy by planting trees in neighborhoods or public spaces with less existing tree canopy, consistent with the One Seattle Tree Plan.



Next Steps

- UFC comments on the TVMP outline-slide 9
- City publishes SEPA and transmits light rail code package to City Council (Q1 2025)
- Draft TVMP for West Seattle Link will be available for UFC comments (Q1 2025)
- Permitting starts for West Seattle Link Extension



Input from the Urban Forestry Commission



- Do you have questions about the concept, outline, or process of developing of a project-level tree plan?
- What information should be included in the TVMP (Slide 9)?
- What should the City of Seattle and Sound Transit consider in a project level tree management plan?

Thank you!

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