



## NORTH LINK LIGHT RAIL

# Updated Tunnel Portal Plan

Q&A TOPIC

NOVEMBER 2011

North Link is a key part of the regional mass transit system approved by voters in 2008. The 4.3-mile light rail extension from the University of Washington to Northgate will provide a fast, reliable option for getting through one of the region's most congested traffic areas. North Link includes stations at Northgate, in the Roosevelt neighborhood and in the University District. North Link is scheduled to open for service in 2021 and is part of the extensions of light rail running north, east and south from Seattle.

As North Link final design progresses, Sound Transit is considering refinements to the light rail tunnel route, stations and other facilities. In late 2010, Sound Transit recommended a tunnel portal site along I-5 near NE 85th Street in north Seattle. Based on additional analysis of design and construction issues, Sound Transit is now considering an alternative tunnel portal site along I-5 near NE 94th Street, approximately 1900 feet north of the previous portal site. This proposed NE 94th portal site continues to be evaluated by Sound Transit and other agencies. The final decision on the portal site is expected in early 2012 following further engineering, public and environmental reviews.

### What is a tunnel portal?

North Link trains will run in tunnels between the University of Washington and about NE 94th Street. Trains will come out of the tunnels at about NE 94th Street along I-5 to serve the elevated Northgate Station. The opening where the tunnels come out of the ground is called a tunnel portal.

North of the portal, the above-ground light rail guideway will travel along the east side of I-5 before crossing over First Avenue NE, south of NE 100th Street. The elevated Northgate Station spans NE 103rd Street.

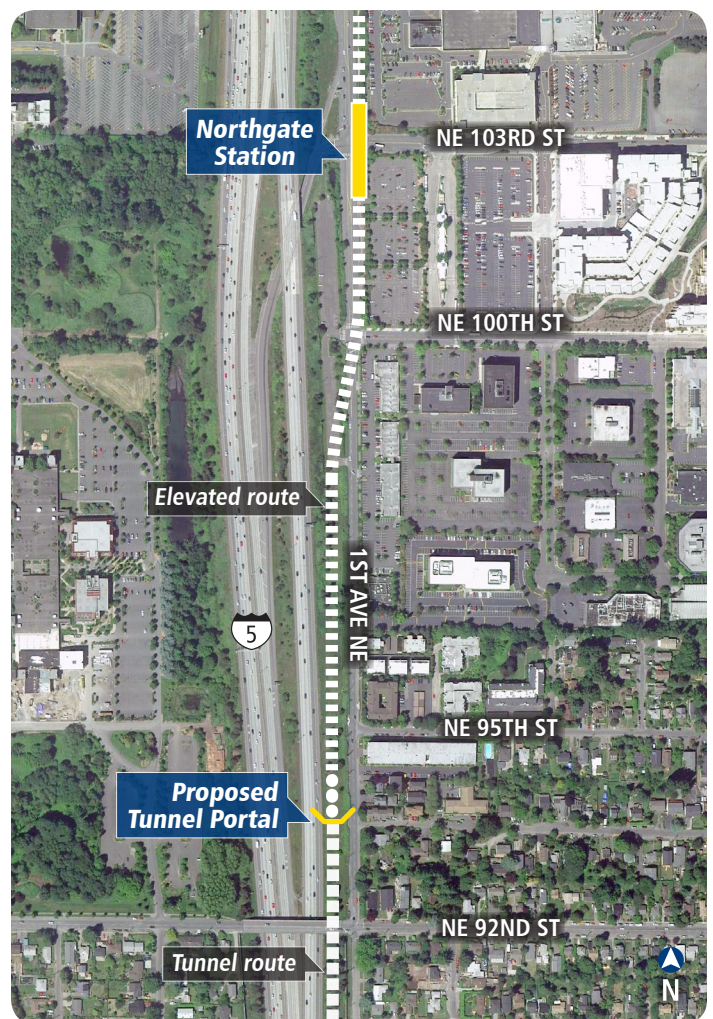
### What will happen at the tunnel portal? When?

Tunnel boring machines will be used to construct the light rail tunnels between the portal site and Roosevelt Station.

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Beacon Hill tunnel portal



The contractor may use a single machine that would go into the ground at NE 94th Street and dig south to the station. From there the tunneling machine would be dis-assembled and trucked back to the portal site to dig the second tunnel. Alternately, the contractor may use two machines that would bore the tunnels concurrently, with the second machine lagging behind the first.

Prior to tunneling, the area will be graded and fenced to prepare for construction beginning in 2013. Tunneling activity at the portal is scheduled to begin in mid 2014 and finish by late 2018.

Once tunneling starts, the excavated dirt from the tunneling activities between NE 94th Street and Roosevelt Station will come out of the tunnel at the portal, where it will be loaded into trucks and hauled away via 1st Avenue NE north to the I-5 freeway ramps near Northgate Way.

#### **Will the sound walls constructed by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) near NE 85th Street be affected by the planned approach?**

No, these sound walls will not be affected by the NE 94th Street tunnel portal site. The proposed option keeps these walls in place to mitigate noise impacts from I-5.

Sound Transit will construct a construction wall around the portal work site to help mitigate the construction noise. Additional noise analysis at the portal site will determine requirements for operational noise mitigation. Sound Transit will continue to keep neighbors informed as the design work progresses.

#### **How many truck trips per day will there be from the portal site?**

The tunneling operation at the portal site is expected to generate about 100 truck trips a day. Depending on the work shifts used by the contractor, the frequency of trucks would range from 4-10 trucks per hour. As final design progresses, truck trip estimates will be updated.

#### **What are the advantages of the NE 94th Street portal site?**

The portal site at NE 94th Street avoids utilities conflicts near NE 85th Street, avoids impacts to the NE 92nd Street bridge across I-5, and has fewer impacts to 1st Avenue NE. It is also a more efficient and cost effective tunneling operations construction site than the site at NE 85th Street. Overall, the extended tunnel and new portal site at NE 94th will have fewer community impacts and is expected to be a similar cost as the tunnel portal site at NE 85th Street.

#### **How can I get involved in North Link final design and stay informed?**

Sign up for project update emails at [www.soundtransit.org/subscribe](http://www.soundtransit.org/subscribe). To request a briefing for your organization or for information about North Link light rail, contact Rhonda Dixon, Community Outreach, at 206-370-5569 or [northlink@soundtransit.org](mailto:northlink@soundtransit.org). You can also visit Sound Transit's website at [www.soundtransit.org/northlink](http://www.soundtransit.org/northlink).

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## **For more information**

For information about Sound Transit projects or services, visit [www.soundtransit.org](http://www.soundtransit.org) or call 1-800-201-4900 / TTY Relay: 711. To receive updates, subscribe online at [www.soundtransit.org/subscribe](http://www.soundtransit.org/subscribe). For information in alternative formats, call 1-800-201-4900/ TTY Relay: 711 or email [accessibility@soundtransit.org](mailto:accessibility@soundtransit.org).

要用中文向 Sound Transit 瞭解有關 Seattle 市中心北區輕鐵的情況，請在正常的工作時間致電 1-800-823-9230。

Seattle 다운타운 북부 경전철에 관해서 Sound Transit과 한국어로 문의하시려면 정상업무 시간 중 1-800-823-9230으로 전화하십시오.

Чтобы поговорить с сотрудником Sound Transit по-русски о легкорельсовых поездах к северу от центра города Seattle, звоните по телефону 1-800-823-9230 в обычные рабочие часы.

Para hablar con Sound Transit en español acerca del riel ligero al norte del centro de Seattle, llame al 1-800-823-9230 durante horas normales de oficina.

Để nói chuyện với Sound Transit bằng tiếng Việt về light rail ở phía Bắc trung tâm thành phố Seattle, xin gọi số điện thoại 1-800-823-9230 trong giờ làm việc thường lệ.