



City of Tacoma

City Council

May 13, 2025

Dear Sound Transit Board Members,

As you deliberate on the Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) project, we wanted to take the opportunity to share our preferred alignment and station options, as well as some key issues that we hope Sound Transit will consider as this work moves forward. We are very excited about the TDLE project, and our community is eager for more light rail options and transit connections, especially as roadway congestion and degraded traffic conditions continue to increase on Interstate 5 and State Route 99. We are grateful for the opportunity to share our perspective and look forward to continued collaboration to ensure the successful delivery of the TDLE project.

The Tacoma Dome Station will serve as the last stop on the Sound Transit light rail spine, and we have an opportunity to make it an iconic finale in a developed historic area. We believe that the Close to Sounder Station option is the best choice for creating an integrated, multi-modal, urban hub in the Dome District. This station option can seamlessly interface with Sound Transit's T Line, which will continue to be the primary mode for connecting transit riders to our Downtown Core, the University of Washington Tacoma, local hospitals, and some of our most dense commercial districts and neighborhoods. In addition, this station option will have a reduced impact on T Line operations during construction, which is vital as we seek to limit transit disruptions in our community.

While we support the Close to Sounder Station option, we are also eager to protect and build upon the local business community that is thriving in and around the Dome District. Many of these businesses are small but vital for our BIPOC community, food access, and transit riders. We want to stress that working together to ensure local businesses are part of the future in the station area, rather than being pushed out by it, is one of our key goals.

We have big dreams for the Tacoma Dome station and want to ensure it reflects the unique history of the Dome District, provides an integrated and dynamic station design that supports this growing urban Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) district, incorporates and builds upon many of the community and transit rider services provided in our existing Freighthouse Square, and serves as an inspiring entrance to the City of Destiny. We envision a welcoming space and vibrant center for community and commerce, infused with natural light and materials, designed to attract local investment and promote co-location of public amenities. We look forward to close design coordination between Sound Transit, the City of Tacoma, and our community to ensure that this station gives riders an exceptional first impression of the Puget Sound Region's second largest city.

In addition to the Close to Sounder Station option, we support the Portland Avenue Station option. Safety is one of our top concerns at this location and the off-street bus loop will help ensure protected bus connections, which is critical as we anticipate that buses will be the primary connection for this station. In addition, we urge Sound Transit to help make significant bike and pedestrian safety improvements in the area, consistent with Sound Transit's System Access Policy. It is especially important that the pedestrian crossing for Portland Avenue be improved for safety to help connect the new station to areas to the west across Portland Avenue. This should include safety improvements for the two underpasses to ensure transit riders can access the amenities, destinations, and residential areas south of Interstate 5. We have proposed a rezone of this area to support TOD as part of our Tideflats Subarea Plan, and we hope this will assist Sound Transit with creating a safe, convenient, and accessible station on Portland Avenue.

Throughout the TDLE project, collaboration with the Puyallup Tribe of Indians will remain imperative for success and we applaud Sound Transit's commitment to uplifting Tribal communities. We greatly value our relationship with the Puyallup Tribe and hope this project will reflect our commitment to being a welcoming city. We urge you to continue to prioritize the importance of close design coordination with the Puyallup Tribe.

Thank you for considering our input as you come to a decision on the preferred alignment and stations. Our City Manager shared a letter with more technical input regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and we are pleased to submit this letter in addition to it. Along with our favored station options, we ask you to keep in mind our requests to focus on ensuring safety improvements, accessibility for individuals with disabilities, supporting positive activation of spaces under and around the entire alignment, and finding ways to help mitigate the construction impacts on our community. We also ask that you maintain close collaboration with the Puyallup Tribe, our City Departments, and other jurisdictions, including Fife, Federal Way, and Pierce County. Finally, we ask Sound Transit to work together with Pierce Transit to ensure seamless and robust local transit access across services.

The future of regional light rail in Tacoma and Pierce County is dawning and we couldn't be more excited. Our city is growing quickly, and we are ready for robust progress meeting the

transit needs of our community and the region. Thank you for your partnership and dedication to the timely delivery of the TDLE project.

Thank you,



Mayor Victoria Woodards



Council Member John Hines – Position 1



Council Member Jamika Scott – Position 3



Council Member Kristina Walker – Position 8



Council Member Sandesh Sadalge – Position 4



Council Member Joe Bushnell – Position 5



Deputy Mayor Kiara Daniels – Position 6



Council Member Olgy Diaz – Position 7