

*6/10/2021 System Expansion Committee
Meeting Public Comment Submissions*

Submissions

Joyce Hengesbach 2
Sean Albert 2
Patty Cokus 3

Joyce Hengesbach

****This comment was submitted as a letter attachment. The letter is included at the end of this document.**

SkyLink wishes to submit to attached commentary for today's System Expansion Committee meeting.

Joyce Hengesbach
West Seattle SkyLink
www.westseattleskylink.org

Sean Albert

Re: Sound Transit Realignment South Boeing Access Road Station

Dear Sound Transit Board:

I am writing to you again today to express my support to retain the South Boeing Access Road (BAR) Light Rail Station with little or no delays when considering various realignment scenarios prepared by Sound Transit staff. Doing so will keep this vital regional project, which will serve the diverse communities of Tukwila, South Seattle, Skyway, and Renton in the pipeline for future construction as promised to the community during the original construction of the system as well as on the voter approved ST3.

The BAR station is vital to implementing major components of the "Metro Connects Long Range Plan." Under this Plan, buses from the south that currently go into downtown Seattle would terminate at the BAR Station, with riders transferring to light rail. This would remove buses from downtown Seattle and improve overall congestion within the downtown core and along Interstate 5. **The BAR Station will serve one of the most diverse residential areas in King County and ranks high on Sound Transit equity scoring.** There are potentially many creative ways to stay on schedule with construction of the BAR station, for example delaying construction of the planned 300 stall parking garage could save millions of dollars in the short term...

Any future delays in building the BAR station, is a continued failure to provide a much needed and vital public transportation lifeline to an extremely diverse population. According to the United States Census residents in this area are 32% Asian, 16% Black, and 10% Hispanic. In addition, 50% of the residents have a first language other than English; 62% are persons of color; and 36% are foreign born. Residents of the area also struggle financially, with 17.2% of the City's residents living below the Federal poverty line. A light rail station at Boeing Access Road will serve a historically underserved population with much needed transit options.

Please consider the above and keep the BAR station on track to open in 2031 or as close to that promised date as possible.

Thank you for your time,

Sean Albert
North Tukwila Resident

Patty Cokus

Re: Sound Transit Realignment South Boeing Access Road Station

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Please consider the above and keep the BAR station on track to open in 2031 or as close to that promised date as possible.

Thank you for your time,

Patty Cokus
North Tukwila Resident

To: Sound Transit Board members

From: West Seattle Sky Link Team

Skylink commends Sound Transit's efforts to expand the region's high frequency, public transit with a focus on equity and sustainability. We are also grateful for the opportunity to provide input to Sound Transit on the plans. Our comments today address the emphasis of Board Members Balducci and Durkan on finding ways to deliver projects on schedule and within budget and Board Member Constantine's challenge to do even better than what was promised to voters.

Our region needs improved transit as soon as possible and cannot afford a five-year delay. On [April 21](#), the Urbanist proposed several measures to get ST3 back on budget and schedule. We think these measures are worth considering and offer two additional ones:

1. **West Seattle:** The estimated cost for this project has almost doubled and proposed light rail routes would cause irreparable damage to the community. The SkyLink proposal would not only avoid such damage while serving the same stations but connect even more urban villages in West Seattle to the Sound Transit network, a decade sooner and for a lower cost than originally budgeted. The savings could be used to mitigate cost overruns on other ST3 projects or for a more direct Link alignment through South Park to Tacoma as [Seattle Subway](#) recently suggested (purple line). This would bring high-frequency transit to even more urban centers and diverse neighborhoods.
2. **Issaquah-Bellevue:** Current buses could continue to transport riders between Issaquah and Mercer Island where they could connect via Link to Seattle. A gondola line between downtown Bellevue, Eastgate, and Factoria would allow bus riders to disembark at the Eastgate station and take the gondola either to Bellevue or Factoria. This would provide transit a decade earlier and reach more urban centers, schools such as Bellevue College, and places of employment such as T-Mobile.

Together with some of the changes proposed by The Urbanist, the above two modifications could balance the budget while providing more sustainable, high-capacity, grade-separated public transit even earlier than promised.