

*3/4/2021 Executive Committee Meeting*  
*Public Comment Submissions*

Submissions

***Joyce Hengesbach*** ..... 2

Joyce Hengesbach

**\*\* The content of this comment is primarily contained within the document referred to below. That document is included on the next page**

Subject	<b>Commentary for March 4 Sound Transit Board Meeting</b>
From	<a href="#">joyce hengesbach</a>
To	Email The Board
Sent	Thursday, March 4, 2021 7:49 AM
Attachments	<<3.4.21 Exec Board commentary.docx>>

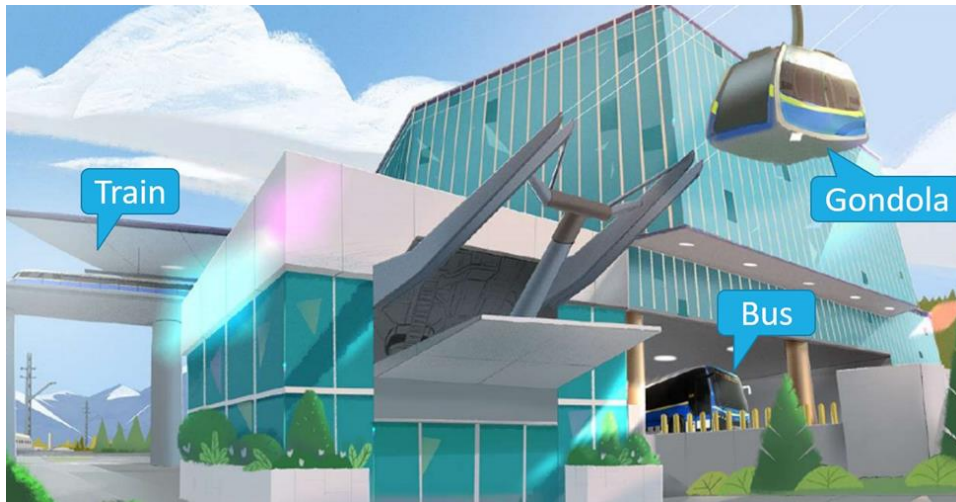
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We would like to submit the attached document as written commentary for today’s Executive Board meeting.

Thank you.

Joyce Hengesbach on behalf of West Seattle SkyLink

[www.westseattleskylink.org](http://www.westseattleskylink.org)



Thank you for your continued efforts to build a comprehensive and much needed regional transit system. We strongly support light rail as the main component of this network.

We believe that in transit terms the axiom “form follows function” translates to “mode suits situation.” Given the topographical challenges facing the West Seattle extension, we ask the board to consider using gondola technology for this project.

On Monday, the City of Vancouver BC announced its decision on a final route for a gondola to serve an area with similar, topographical challenges to hilly West Seattle. To connect the Burnaby Mountain campus of Simon Fraser University to the Skytrain line far below, the City considered eleven alternative transit modes, and rejected most – including light rail and Skytrain (the latter being Vancouver’s main transit mode along with buses.) Then the City conducted a comparison study of bus and gondola, and concluded that “a gondola could improve travel time, service frequency and reliability – and drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions.” They also determined that the cost of operating a gondola would be half that of using buses. To simplify transfers, the station on the Skytrain line will integrate the gondola as well as buses serving other locations.

Sound Transit’s 2014 Technology Issues Paper identified gondola as an HCT option suitable for connecting off-spine neighborhoods such as West Seattle. It would allow Sound Transit to deliver the West Seattle project more economically and earlier than the 2030 date committed to voters.

Doing a gondola feasibility study would determine economic and technical specifications. The study would take two months and cost about \$250,000, money well spent considering the potential to save \$2 billion on construction and reduce the cost of future operations.

**Short Burnaby video:** [Burnaby Mountain Gondola Public Engagement, Nov. 23 – Dec. 14, 2020](#)



**Burnaby selection report:** [Microsoft Word - BMGT Business Case Public Final.docx \(translink.ca\)](#)