

4/1/2021 Executive Committee Meeting
Public Comment Submissions

Submissions

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Dear Executive Board Members,

We appreciate the challenges Sound Transit staff and board members face in realigning ST3 plans to deal with the \$11.5 billion budget shortfall.

The possible realignment scenarios presented at the March 25 Board meeting suggest how delaying delivery dates and/or phasing projects could accommodate the amount of funding available. However, extending timelines and taking on more debt raises the total cost of ST3 which in turn increases the number of years taxpayers pay taxes for transit which will not be delivered when promised. Board Members Durkan and Dammeier expressed concern about this impact, and we agree.

We also noted that Board members Balducci and Dammeier have suggested that in addition to consideration of delaying and phasing projects, Sound Transit investigate opportunities for **cost savings** and **value engineering**. Along the same lines, the final scenario illustrating the positive impact of moving parking to the end of the project timeline (as suggested by Board member Millar) shows how **creative** thinking has the potential to reduce costs and mitigate delays in the absence of additional funding and debt.

The gondola alternative for the West Seattle extension is a **creative, cost saving, value engineering** idea that would shorten the timeline for this project and several others. A gondola could be built by 2025 and save \$2 billion. It would eliminate costly real estate purchases, a bridge, an elevated guideway, and possibly underground stations. When combined with the postponed parking scenario and some already identified federal monies, using a gondola in this one situation could reduce delays on Tier 2 and 3 projects from three to nine years.

Years of delay: Delay Parking

Tier		No new revenue	+ \$4 billion	+ \$6 billion	+ \$9 billion
1	Lynnwood – Mariner NP, Federal Way - Fife NP, 405 Stride South NP, 522 Stride NP, Delridge – Smith Cove, S. Kirkland Eastgate NP, Kent, Auburn, Sumner, OMF North, OMF South, Bus Base N, 2 nd Downtown Tunnel	2	2	2	1
2	Mariner-Everett NP, Fife-Tacoma Dome NP, S Tacoma, Lakewood, 405 Stride North NP, Delridge - Alaska Jct. Smith Cove – Ballard	5	2	2	1
3	Sounder platforms, trips & access	11	2	2	1
4	Graham St., Boeing Access Rd., Hilltop-TCC, Eastgate-Issaquah, Edmonds & Mukilteo, NE 130 th St., N Sammamish, RapidRide C/D, SR-162, DuPont Sounder, parking for Everett Link, Tacoma Dome Link, 405 & 522 Stride, & S Kirkland-Eastgate	14	12	4	1

On behalf of taxpayers who would prefer a return on their investment as soon as possible rather than delayed results and more taxes, we urge you to seriously consider using a gondola instead of light rail for the West Seattle extension.

Joyce Hengesbach on behalf of the West Seattle SkyLink Team
www.westseattleskylink.org