

6/24/2021 Board of Directors Meeting

Public Comment Submissions

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Kirkland Mayor Penny Sweet

The substance of this comment are enclosed in a letter attached at the end of this document.

Chair Keel and Members of the Board,
Please see the attached letter from the Kirkland City Council.
Thank you!

Amy Bolen

Executive Assistant, City Manager's Office
City of Kirkland
123 5th Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033
P: 425.587.3007
abolen@kirklandwa.gov

John Reiher

Members of the Sound Transit Board,
I'm a frequent rider of transit in the Puget Sound area, traveling to downtown Seattle on a regular basis, as well as other locations in the Puget Sound area. The 522 BRT would make those trips that much easier and more affordable for this transit rider. But, I understand that with ridership down and a lack of will in the Washington State government to adequately fund alternatives to the car in the transportation budget is a thing. So, perhaps you need to trim some fat in other ways from the project.
For example the new parking garage at the Kenmore Park & Ride. To be honest, in 20 years, it will sit mostly empty as fewer and fewer people travel to work. While current corporations want their workers back in the offices, 2020 showed that for many office workers, working from home was more productive. That being the case, "going to the office" may become a once a month trip at worst, and once a week at best. So, instead of a massive parking garage that costs a lot of money, how about more bicycle infrastructure? More bike lockers so that folks commuting on the Burke-Gilman Trail have a safe and secure place to lock up their bike and gear?
Another place to trim the costs are the new BRT only stops that have been proposed. Why? There are existing stops on 522 that can be easily upgraded to a combination of BRT/Bus transit stops. The only argument I've heard against such a plan is "it would confuse the passengers." Let me be frank, I've ridden the bus enough times to know that those people who would be confused by the difference between the BRT and a local bus are already confused now. Reducing the confusion can be done by providing sufficient and understandable information on the difference between the two modes of transit. And the confusion would only be for a short period of time.
In addition, I see on the project map that there are 14 proposed BRT stops. Could you actually get by with 11 stops? 10 stops? How many are there because someone "might" use the BRT? Those stops can be added in at a later date if the need arises.
All in all, the 522 BRT route is worthy of support and continuation. Please keep the project on the current schedule.
Thank you,
--
John Reiher
Have Mac, will Travel

Julia Bent

To Whom It May Concern:

I am dismayed Sound Transit may not proceed with implementing 522 BRT. While I know that ST is experiencing financial difficulties following the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, it would seem that not going forward with 522 BRT would be an instance of “cutting off your nose to spite your face.” Kenmore has already modified a portion of Bothell Way for 522 BRT. Further extensive widening and lane additions between Kenmore and Bothell is now nearing completion in order to support 522 BRT. I can only imagine how much the cost for this modification was! To then decide not to make use of this expense and expansion seems lunatic to me.

On a more personal note: I am a seventy-three years old resident of Lake Forest Park, and I know that as I age I'll become more and more dependent on public transportation. I've been looking forward to the 522 BRT as a means for me to get downtown easily on Link for doctors' appointments, etc. Without the 522 BRT, it will become much more difficult for me to maintain my mobility as I age.

Thanks for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Julia Bent

Jonathan Melusky

Hello, We live on 32nd Ave NE in Shoreline and we are looking forward to taking light rail to work and the airport and downtown as needed. Please keep the project as it is too far to walk to the station. Thank you for your time. Cheers, Jonathan Melusky and Jennifer Hyatt.

Diana

I am writing in support of maintaining the funding and current timeline for the Sound Transit 522/145th Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project.

Our communities need mass transit that runs east west to the light rail station on 145th now. With our growing population, these two major thoroughfares, SR 522 and 145th st, are currently pushed beyond their capabilities. The SR 522/NE 145th BRT will provide an efficient way to alleviate traffic jams, and transport citizens to school, work, and life activities.

The infrastructure for the buses is already available. Sound Transit has an elegant way to incorporate the buses by using what the cities have already built. The roads, bus lane, and infrastructure are there. Using these facilities makes this project cost effective for Sound Transit.

It will provide a low cost efficient connection to light rail. We need to connect transportation links so that mass transit is a viable, attractive option .Ridership needs inexpensive east west movement and the connection of 6 cities now .The light rail station will be there, we need group transportation to it.

This project was voted on by the citizenship. It has popular support. Completing it within the original time frame will help future good will and ballot measures. I urge you to stay on schedule and complete this vital connection by 2025.

Sincerely,
Diana

Janelle Callahan

Please do not cut or delay the SR 522/NE 145th Bus Rapid Transit project. It's important to link the 145th street station to other east-west locations in the area. The cities of Bothell, Kenmore, and Shoreline have already provided the infrastructure for this project. As a resident of Shoreline who lives near the 145th street station, I'm concerned about traffic congestion, and also the practicality of using light rail for myself and others if bus connections are limited. The BRT seems like such a sensible and cost-effective solution to help everyone move efficiently along this corridor and ease congestion. Please also consider how the BRT project may affect future light rail ridership numbers. Traveling by light rail becomes a much more feasible option for many more people if there is an easy way to get to and from the station.

Thank you,
Janelle Callahan
Shoreline

Janet Quinn

The substance of this comment are enclosed in a letter attached at the end of this document.

Dear Chair Keel and Members of the Board,
Attached are comments related to Sound Transit realignment submitted for your consideration prior to tomorrow's board meeting.

Thank you.
Janet Quinn
Kenmore Resident

Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Seattle Southside Chamber, Everett Station District Alliance, and Downtown Everett Association

The substance of this comment are enclosed in a letter attached at the end of this document.

Dear Chair Keel and members of the Sound Transit Board of Directors:

Our region's economic competitiveness and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic relies on a transit system that provides reliable choices for employees, supports our response to climate change and affordable housing, and enhances the communities where it is built and operates. Attached please find a letter from the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Seattle Southside Chamber, Everett Station District Alliance, and Downtown Everett Association requesting the Board of Directors not act on the program realignment in July and conduct additional engagement and analysis.

Sincerely,
Rachel

Rachel Smith

President and CEO

[Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce](#)

Joint Letter from Tukwila Community Leaders, Residents, and Businesses

The substance and all signees of this comment are enclosed in a letter attached at the end of this document.

Dear Sound Transit Board-

Please find attached a letter signed by nearly 50 community leaders, residents, and business urging the Board to make the Boeing Access Road Light Rail Station a priority as part of any realignment efforts.

Best Regards,

Brandon J. Miles

Business Relations Manager

City of Tukwila

Commenter Name

The substance of this comment are enclosed in a letter attached at the end of this document.

We are submitting the attached written commentary for the June 24 Board Meeting.

Joyce Hengesbach
West Seattle SkyLink
www.westseattleskylink.org

SeaShore Transportation Forum

The substance of this comment are enclosed in a letter attached at the end of this document.

Dear Esteemed Sound Transit Board,

Please find attached letter from SeaShore Transportation Forum (North King County elected officials and agency partners) regarding realignment.

Respectfully,

Lauren Batalias (Craig), J.D.
Local Government Relations and Partnerships Lead
Office of the General Manager
King County Metro Transit

Joint Letter Coordinated by the Bellevue Chamber

The substance and all signees of this comment are enclosed in a letter attached at the end of this document.

Chair Keel and Members of the Board,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the realignment work currently under consideration. Please see the attached letter from several organizations and cities that support the prioritization and timely delivery of the Stride Bus Rapid Transit.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Joe Fain
CEO & President, Bellevue Chamber

*City Climate Action Committee and League of Women Voters,
Seattle/King County*

Members of the Sound Transit Board:

"The League of Women Voters, Seattle/King County is working with 20 King County Cities including Seattle to ensure democratic engagement of the public in climate impacting decisions. The implementation of ST3 is one such plan, because it promises to drop carbon emissions and reduce single car transit through a strategic public transit system.

However, your potentially rushed plan to adopt a realignment scenario for the ST3 plan by July 2021 appears to be premature and lacks public engagement. The significant potential delays in all three scenarios you are considering may not be necessary, if you take time now to gather more budgetary information from federal and local sources.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely:

MAK Mitchell, Chair, City Climate Action Committee (CCAC), League of Women Voters, Seattle/King County

Alexis Juday-Marshall, Co-Chair, CCAC for Seattle City Council Districts, League of Women Voters, Seattle/King County

cc. Heather Kelly, President, League of Women Voters, Seattle-King County

MAK Mitchell

Chair, City Climate Action Committee

LWV-SKC

Economic Alliance of Snohomish County

The substance of this comment are enclosed in a letter attached at the end of this document.

Dear Chair Keel and members of the Sound Transit Board of Directors:

The urgent need for a high-quality transit system as close as possible to the Sound Transit 3 schedule and planned projects approved by voters in 2016 is why we request the Board of Directors not act on the program realignment in July and not until the following work can be completed.

Please see our attached letter outlining additional actions to be taken.

J.C. Smith

Good afternoon:

The proposed realignment plan by the chair is not acceptable. This plan is an easy way out of a serious set of financial challenges. The board has not done the work to approve a plan. While there has been a lot of talk, there has not been action to make choices that will reduce project costs and secure additional funding. This framework proposed by the chair is lazy at best and actively harmful at worst. It will not drive future boards to do the work either. Now is the time to do the work. This is why the timeline for this process must be extended. We must keep projects on-time or as close to on-time as possible for all subareas. The board needs to find another way. And while perhaps out of scope for this matter, this process shows that the chair should be deposed for lack of confidence in his commitment and abilities to manage this process responsibly.

J. C. Smith

Bellevue Downtown Association

The substance of this comment are enclosed in a letter attached at the end of this document.

Greetings,

Please see the attached letter regarding BDA input on the realignment program. Please include the letter in the materials for ST Board discussion.

Sincerely,

Matt

June 22, 2021

Sound Transit Board
401 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104



RE: Sound Transit Program Realignment

Dear Chair Keel and Members of the Board:

Any action on program realignment should not delay the delivery of the complete Stride Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) programs on I-405 and SR 522. Stride BRT on I-405 and SR 522 provides high capacity transit (HCT) service across four of the five Sound Transit subareas and should not be delayed for the following reasons:

- **Early Delivery/Early Wins** – Its early delivery date in the ST3 plan provides an early win to many communities who currently do not have direct access to HCT.
- **Cost-Effective and Efficient** – While other Sound Transit projects in the planning/design phase are experiencing major cost increases, I-405 and SR 522 BRT are not, and the service can be implemented at a fraction of the cost per mile of other ST3 projects. Moving forward now will also save inflation related construction costs.
- **Connectivity** – It is the only north-south HCT connection for the growing population and job centers in East King County and provides important connectivity to Link light rail in Lynnwood, Shoreline, Bellevue and Tukwila.
- **Construction-Ready** – Stride BRT is ready to move forward and builds on infrastructure that is in place or will be soon. This infrastructure is the result of many years of planning and programming that has been done cooperatively by a broad coalition of regional partners.

Also, of critical importance to the City of Kirkland is the I-405/NE 85th St. Interchange and In-line BRT Station. Regardless of any other decisions related to program realignment, the Board should reverse its decision to pause this project and allow it to move forward immediately. The I-405/NE 85th St. Interchange and In-line Station have independent utility and the project is ready to begin the procurement process for a design-build contractor within months. The in-line station will significantly expand access between transit service on I-405 (regardless if it is Regional Express or Stride), and jobs and housing in Kirkland and Redmond. As of now, the only place people in Kirkland can directly access any Sound Transit service is at the in-line station in Totem Lake. Finally, the project supports transit oriented development already underway near the station and the ongoing NE 85th St. Station Area Plan.

We would like to thank Sound Transit Board Members for all your efforts on the program realignment process. In order to deliver the benefits of HCT to the region as quickly as possible, we support identifying additional regional, state and federal revenue sources to address shortfalls and encourage the Board to make realignment decisions that minimize delays to the ST3 timelines voters approved.

Sincerely,
CITY OF KIRKLAND

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Penny Sweet".

Penny Sweet

Mayor

June 23, 2021

Sound Transit Board
401 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: Stride 3 BRT from I-405 in Bothell to Light Rail in Shoreline

Dear Chair Keel and Members of the Board:

It has been some time since I attended your meetings at Union Station wearing my bright yellow 522 Transit NOW! t-shirt and advocating for inclusion of the 522 BRT lanes in the ST3 package. I am attaching comments I made during the 3-24-2016 Board meeting because they are just as relevant now as they were then. It is easy to forget while pandemic traffic is lighter, but Highway 522 is a major transportation corridor that moves thousands of people daily. As you make ST3 realignment decisions in the coming weeks, I join with many others to ask that you keep the Stride 3 BRT project from Bothell to Shoreline on schedule.

The northeast Seattle metro region of Kenmore, Bothell and Woodinville is undergoing exponential growth. In addition to new residential communities, the Northshore School District is adding schools and the University of Washington, Bothell campus is adding buildings. Finishing Stride 3 BRT will be a solid win, with timely delivery on the commitment made to ST3 voters to connect the northeast region to the light rail spine. Opportunely, a substantial portion of the BRT lanes for the project are already built and Stride 3 BRT is uniquely under budget.

Stride 3 BRT is key to the system's success. Capitalizing on existing infrastructure and reducing single occupancy vehicle trips in the 522 corridor would also be a significant climate action step. Thank you for working to build a regional transit system and for considering this urgent request.

Sincerely,



Janet Quinn
Kenmore Resident

Thank you, Chair Constantine and members of the Sound Transit Board, for the opportunity to address you.

I'm here today as Chair of the 522 Transit Now! Coalition representing business and civic leaders and citizens from Kenmore, Bothell, Woodinville, Lake Forest Park and Shoreline, to ask you to include 522 and related projects in the ST3 package.

I moved to Seattle in 1979, the year the 520 bridge tolling ended—21 years earlier than projected. Daily volume expectation when the bridge was built was 15,000 cars. Today, Hwy 522 sees almost **5 times** that number of cars on a daily basis and is a major corridor for the region's traffic. This northern region is home to critical destination centers for jobs, higher education, and traditional and naturopathic medicine, and includes growing biotech, telecommunications, technology, engineering, wine, microbrewing and many more industries.

The 522 Transit Now! Coalition is specifically asking that ST3 include N-09: 145th St. and SR 522 Bus Rapid Transit; Parking structures that would enable and encourage bus ridership and reduce congestion on all roads; and a light rail study for 522, an important component to expand the spine of light rail for a truly regional solution.

We also want to thank you for your service to our region, and we stand ready to partner with you to help ST3 come to fruition. We believe that the 522 corridor must be an integral part of any planning for regional transit. Hindsight tells us that traffic is likely to exceed projections, so please continue to work toward a regional light rail solution. Again, thank you for your work!

Janet Quinn
3-24-2016

June 22, 2021

The Honorable Kent Keel
Chair, Board of Directors
Sound Transit
401 S. Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104-2826

Dear Chair Keel and members of the Sound Transit Board of Directors:

Building a quality high-capacity transit system has been a priority for the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce since the inception of Sound Transit. Our region's economic competitiveness and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic relies on a transit system that provides reliable choices for employees, supports our response to climate change and affordable housing, and enhances the communities where it is built and operates.

The urgent need for a high-quality transit system as close as possible to the Sound Transit 3 schedule and planned projects approved by voters in 2016 is why we request the Board of Directors not act on the program realignment in July and not until the following work can be completed.

1. Conduct deeper engagement with the business community and others to solicit input on the scenarios under consideration. Sound Transit has conducted outreach to inform the community of the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and solicited input from the public on priority projects within each subarea. There has, however, not been directed and sustained outreach to business leadership and their representatives, to businesses engaged in transportation, or an opportunity for input to the programmatic scenarios being considered now. Some of the scenarios were released as recently as June 3 and could delay projects by more than 10 years. Taking the time now will build support for the future actions necessary to keep the program as close to the original schedule as possible.
2. Develop a new scenario that keeps the program on schedule and describes what revenue and/or capital cost savings are needed and when. We understand the ST3 ballot measure requires the Board to realign the program when it is unaffordable at both the regional and subarea level. This new scenario will give us collectively a roadmap for making project-level decisions, securing additional federal, state, or local funds in a timely manner, understanding and revising economic assumptions, responding to updated economic forecasts. We understand some of this work has already been done but adopting it along with a program realignment will give greater incentive and accountability for achieving it. Delaying the realignment action will also give more time for action on an infrastructure program, currently under consideration by U.S. Congress.
3. Define a more robust process for the proposed annual program review to evaluate whether project schedules can be advanced based on new revenue, cost and debt capacity information. This should include an opportunity to review scenarios or options for changing delivery schedules and clear communication about where project-level decisions, or the lack thereof, are resulting in cost and schedule uncertainty.

4. Incorporate the recommendations of the independent cost consultant contract and lessons learned from meetings with partner agencies into the proposed realignment motion. In early 2021 significant cost increases on several projects were presented to the Board, which is now the largest contribution to the affordability gap. The independent cost estimate review consultant is still drafting recommendations for consideration by the Board at its June 24 meeting, just one month ahead of the proposed realignment action at the Board's July meeting.

We believe this work can be accomplished and still meet the schedule to update the agency's Transit Improvement Plan, 2022 budget, and finance plan by the end of the year.

Let us be clear. The business community supports Sound Transit's mission and the projects that make up the Sound Move, Sound Transit 2, and Sound Transit 3 programs. We actively supported the program development, advocated for voter approval, and will continue to advocate for federal and state funding solutions. That is why we are concerned about project delays or preemptive cost reductions, including limiting projects or changing station implementation. The region needs and deserves a high-quality transit system as part of our economic recovery from the pandemic. That is why we are asking for the Board to take the additional actions described in this letter.

We remain committed to actively engaging with you and the agency as we work toward solutions that deliver a high-capacity transit system for the Puget Sound region.

Sincerely,

Rachel Smith
President and CEO
Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Andrea Reay
President and CEO
Seattle Southside Chamber

Brock Howell
Executive Director
Everett Station District Alliance

Liz Stenning
Executive Director
Downtown Everett Association



June 23, 2021

Sound Transit Board
401 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: Sound Transit Realignment
Boeing Access Road Station

Dear Chair Keel and Sound Transit Board:

In 2015 business and community leaders in north Tukwila, south Seattle, and Skyway came together to collectively advocate for the inclusion of the Boeing Access Road (BAR) Light Rail Infill station in the Sound Transit 3 funding package. We urge the Board to retain this project as a high priority in the Sound Transit construction plan and as part of the current Sound Transit realignment efforts.

When constructed, the BAR Light Rail Station would serve the Tukwila Manufacturing Industrial Center and the Duwamish (Seattle) Manufacturing Industrial Center with convenient light rail. These two combined MICs have an area of nearly 6,000 acres, with 72,000 jobs, and just under 2,000 places of employment, including businesses such as Boeing, Amazon, Boeing Field, MacDonald Miller, Raisbeck Aviation High School, Darigold, the Museum of Flight, and the Georgetown campus of South Seattle Community College. According to PSRC's latest report on Regional Centers, less than 10% of the people who work in the two MICs live in one of the MICs. Most people who work at our businesses live outside the area and need to commute in passenger vehicles to get to work. Providing a light rail station would expand the transit options for employees and the people that live in the area.

The residential neighborhoods in Tukwila, south Seattle, Skyway and Renton are some of King County County's most diverse areas, with residents being 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. Despite the economic challenges in this area and having a light rail run through our neighborhoods, this is a transit desert, with no ability to access light rail and very little bus service. A light rail station would a step forward in addressing the transit disparity that exists in the Boeing Access Road area.

Our community has been promised a light rail station in the Boeing Access Road area since the original Sound Move ballot measure. Due to cost increases for the entire Sound Transit system, the Station was deferred in the mid-2000s, but was never eliminated as a future project. In 2015 the community came together to advocate for the inclusion of the BAR Station in Sound Transit 3, which was approved by

voters. We feel that Sound Transit has regularly broken promises to our community regarding the BAR Station.

We ask that you honor the commitments have been made to our communities for over 20 years. Please ensure that that the Boeing Access Road Light Rail Station remains in the capital plan as part of realignment. We have waited too long for the fulfillment of two votes approved measures approving the construction of this station.

Sincerely,

David Sabey
President, Sabey Corporation

Benson Porter
President/CEO, BECU

Andrea Reay
President/CEO, Seattle Southside Chamber of Commerce

Matt Hayes
President/CEO, Museum of Flight

Larry Reid
President/Georgetown Merchant Association

Sean Albert
Allentown Resident

James Raisbeck
Raisbeck Engineering

Allan Ekberg
Mayor, City of Tukwila

Kate Kruller
Council President, City of Tukwila

Verna Seal
Councilmember, City of Tukwila

De'Sean Quinn
Councilmember, City of Tukwila

Dr. Flip Herdon
Superintendent, Tukwila School District

Mark Everton
President/CEO, Seattle Southside Regional Tourism Authority

Cynthia Delostrinos Johnson
Councilmember, City of Tukwila

Svetoslav Moutafov
Duwamish Neighborhood Resident

Antoaneta Moutafova
Duwamish Neighborhood Resident

Stelian Moutafov
Duwamish Neighborhood Resident

Nedko Petkov
Duwamish Neighborhood Resident

Lynn Fazio
Duwamish Resident

Calyn Hostetler
Allentown Resident

Sally H. Blake
Allentown Resident

Bronwen Stevenson
Duwamish Resident

Scott Stevenson
Duwamish Resident

Thomas McLeod
Councilmember, City of Tukwila

Mary Fertakis M.Ed.
Allentown Resident

Nikolas Knutson-Bradac
Duwamish Resident

Kelly Garrett
Duwamish Resident

Lenora Ivanek
Duwamish Resident

Delilah Ivanek
Duwamish Resident

Teo Hunter
Duwamish Resident

Lisa Krober
Allentown Resident

Jakob Krober
Allentown Resident

Frank Reinhardt
Duwamish Resident

Kathy Hougardy
Councilmember, City of Tukwila

Fin Hardy
Vice President, WHCA

David Shumate
Duwamish Resident

Ben Oliver
President/CEO, Starfire Sports

Heidi Watters
Allentown Resident

Benjamin Ivanek
Duwamish Resident

Rocco Ivanek
Duwamish Resident

Lauren Hunter
Duwamish Resident

Andreas Krober
Allentown Resident

Angela Steel
Duwamish Resident

Sean Goode
Allentown Resident

Jean Thompson
Owner/CEO, Seattle Chocolates

Zak Idan
Councilmember, City of Tukwila

To: Sound Transit Board

From: The SkyLink Coalition

Date: June 24, 2021

West Seattle SkyLink appreciates Sound Transit's continuing work on realignment, and the agency's commitment to public input in that process.

For the past six months we have been urging Sound Transit to study an urban gondola as a cost and time saving, environmentally smart alternative for the West Seattle connection. We have submitted in depth, written commentary about various aspects of the gondola proposal at past meetings. Today we are providing a summary of the reasons we believe Sound Transit should consider a gondola as a value engineering measure for meeting cost and schedule commitments.

A gondola could be operational a decade sooner than light rail. It would:

- Deliver the high frequency, grade separated transit called for in ST3 years ahead of schedule,
- Handle twice the number of rides projected for 2040 in about the same or better transit time as light rail,
- Address West Seattle's urgent need for public transit apart from crowded roadways and bridges.

A gondola would save Sound Transit \$2 billion in construction costs. It would:

- Eliminate the need for a bridge, elevated guideway, and complex construction from SODO across the West Seattle freeway,
- Reduce station size and cost.

A gondola would be more cost effective to operate and maintain.

- Gondolas usually operate at a profit (Light rail fares recoup only 1/3 of costs)
- Gondolas do not require a separate maintenance and storage facility like light rail.

A gondola would reduce damage and disruption to West Seattle. A gondola would:

- Require small footings for slim towers placed far apart, eliminating the need for clearing a wide ROW and demolishing approximately 100 homes,
- Preserve space on streets for cars, trucks, buses, bikes and sidewalks,
- Be constructed with minimal time and disturbance by assembling pre-made parts,
- Avoid lengthy construction at the main entrance areas to both the high and low West Seattle bridges.

A gondola would greatly accelerate meeting King County's goal of having a Zero Emission Transit Fleet by 2035.

- A gondola's central electric motor can run on clean energy and the cabins produce NO particulate emissions.
- The carbon footprint of building a gondola is much smaller than light rail since there's no need to clear a wide ROW, build a bridge, elevated guideway and other complex structures (including possibly a tunnel.)

A gondola would be a safer choice. Gondolas have:

- The best safety record of high-capacity, public transit modes,
- Sophisticated back-up systems to reduce downtime and handle other operational issues,
- Continuous boarding which minimizes crime associated with waiting at stations,
- Sophisticated video and audio emergency response systems in the cabins,
- Better ability to withstand an earthquake than a large, fixed, concrete structure like an elevated light rail guideway.

A gondola could serve more urban centers and increase social equity.

- Light rail is already 73% over budget on the West Seattle project which serves only one station reaching a diverse population – indirectly by Rapid Ride H. For \$2 billion less, a gondola would serve the same stations and also directly reach the diverse High Point neighborhood and two additional urban centers (Admiral and Morgan junctions.)
- By being more cost effective in West Seattle, Sound Transit would be able to accelerate projects which advance social equity, such as the Link alignment through South Park to Tukwila or the Rainier Link extension to Renton proposed by [Seattle Subway](#).

A gondola is good for Seattle and Sound Transit.

- Continuous boarding will improve rider experience.
- With its dependably quick transit time and interesting views, it will be attractive not only to commuters but to drivers and people who have not previously used public transit.
- It will promote the use of the Link network many years earlier than planned.
- It will stimulate commerce and tourism.

As indicated above, the SkyLink gondola would save significant money and connect West Seattle to the Sound Transit network a decade earlier while advancing sustainability, social equity, and operational goals. We urge Sound Transit to commission an environmental/technical study of the gondola alternative as soon as possible so that it can be considered later this year along with light rail plans being studied in the DEIS.

June 24, 2021

Dear Chair Keel,

The SeaShore Transportation Forum is writing to provide our perspective on the current realignment process for Sound Transit 3 that the board is considering. SeaShore urges timely completion of SR 522 Stride BRT as well as a strong effort by the board to attempt to deliver the ST3 program as closely to what voters approved by seeking new funding and reducing costs where possible.

The SeaShore Transportation Forum ("SeaShore") is a body of elected officials and professional staff from jurisdictions in north King and south Snohomish Counties that meets monthly to advocate for transportation needs in our region. **Members include the cities of Seattle, Shoreline, Lake Forest Park, Edmonds, Mountlake Terrace, Kenmore, Bothell, and Woodinville; King County; Snohomish County; Community Transit; and Sound Transit.**

We know that the Sound Transit Board is facing many difficult challenges as they work to ensure the ST3 plan is affordable in the face of revenue losses during the pandemic and cost increases over the original estimates. As our region emerges from the pandemic transit will be more important than ever and it is essential that there is equitable access to reliable transit options. Some of our cities are concerned that their ability to access Sound Transit's BRT and Link programs would be limited due to topography or land use patterns.

The SeaShore Forum also wishes to express our shared priority for the timely completion of SR 522 Bus Rapid Transit (Stride). This project provides key access to the upcoming 148th Street light rail station and is critical for our communities which have seen considerable growth in the last few decades with relatively little new transportation investment. Our jurisdictions have worked closely with Sound Transit staff to help ensure an efficient BRT line, and recent cost estimates of the 522 BRT showed a 17% decrease in costs from 2019 to 2020. It was originally billed as an early deliverable in the Sound Transit 3 plan, and we believe it should remain so to continue to coordinate as closely as possible with the opening of Lynnwood Link.

As the board deliberates on how to realign the ST3 financial plan, we wish to emphasize that sacrifices should be shared between subareas. Our member cities provided some of the strongest support for the passage of ST3, and we should attempt to honor the will of the voters in delivering the ST3 package as originally promised. Given that much of the current financial challenge is due to cost estimation increases, we believe that it is necessary for the agency to look deeply at how they estimate projects and to look for opportunities for cost reduction while keeping the quality of the projects high before making decisions to delay projects. We hope that Sound Transit will continue to focus efforts on finding new federal and state funding to ensure that the Sound Transit 3 program can be completed in as timely of a manner as possible.

The SeaShore Transportation Forum thanks you for the opportunity to comment on the Sound Transit 3 realignment process and for your leadership in making these difficult decisions.

Sincerely,

The SeaShore Transportation Forum

June 24, 2021

Sound Transit Board of Directors
401 S. Jackson St
Seattle WA 98104-2826

Re: Program Realignment -- Stride Bus Rapid Transit Projects

Dear Chair Keel and Members of the Board,

As the Sound Transit Board considers its options as part of the ST3 Realignment, **the undersigned organizations and cities encourage the prioritization and timely delivery of the Stride Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) that will connect the communities along I-405 from Burien to Lynnwood and SR 522 from Shoreline to Bothell.** We also encourage close coordination and collaboration with WSDOT as they work to identify alternative funding options for the I-405/SR 522 capacity improvements and develop a bond proceeds corridor plan which are closely tied to the delivery and success of the ST projects. We cannot wait any longer for the delivery of these important projects and we urge you to keep them on schedule.

East King County is in dire need of these projects because it will experience more employment growth than any location in Washington State by 2025. Large employers have publicly announced that more than 30,000 new jobs are coming to the Eastside by 2025. This unprecedented growth will add further pressure to our already overburdened transportation system and the expansion of BRT along I-405 is a crucial component of easing traffic and providing residents with fast, frequent and reliable bus service that will connect east side communities. BRT is a cost-effective way to move people quickly, and as significant growth occurs along the I-405 and SR 522 corridors, access to transit options will be a critical factor in keeping our region out of gridlock. The fact that cost estimates for Stride BRT have **decreased** since 2019 should be strongly factored and rewarded in the Board's deliberations.

While we acknowledge that the BRT project is closely connected to the state's delivery of capacity improvements between SR 522 and SR 527, this linkage should not impact Sound Transit's commitment to the project. During the 2021 legislative session, the state signaled its ongoing commitment to the corridor by rejecting policies that would've interrupted toll bonding authorization, and by directing WSDOT to consider phasing and funding alternatives to keep the state projects on track. We strongly urge Sound Transit to avoid making rash changes to the BRT delivery timeline while the state is still collecting and evaluating important corridor information. Instead, Sound Transit should continue to collaborate with the state in identifying creative solutions that deliver these projects to this region's residents without delay.

Areas such as East King County will be an economic engine that will help the entire state not only recover, but thrive following the pandemic. We should not hinder this growth by delaying these critical BRT projects that will accommodate this growth in jobs and population expected in just three short years. No one could have anticipated that a global pandemic would

challenge the implementation of these plans, but we thank you for your leadership to find creative solutions that keep the Stride BRT projects on track and on schedule.



June 23, 2021

The Honorable Kent Keel
Chair, Board of Directors
Sound Transit
401 S. Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104-2826

RE: Sound Transit Realignment

Dear Chair Keel and members of the Sound Transit Board of Directors:

Building a quality high-capacity transit system has been a priority for the Economic Alliance Snohomish County since the inception of Sound Transit. Our region's economic competitiveness and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic relies on a transit system that provides reliable choices for employees, supports our response to climate change and affordable housing, and enhances the communities where it is built and operates.

The urgent need for a high-quality transit system as close as possible to the Sound Transit 3 schedule and planned projects approved by voters in 2016 is why we request the Board of Directors not act on the program realignment in July and not until the following work can be completed.

1. Conduct deeper engagement with the business community and others to solicit input on the scenarios under consideration. Sound Transit has conducted outreach to inform the community of the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and solicited input from the public on priority projects within each subarea. There has, however, not been directed and sustained outreach to business leadership and their representatives, to businesses engaged in transportation, or an opportunity for input to the programmatic scenarios being considered now. Some of the scenarios were released as recently as June 3 and could delay projects by more than 10 years. Taking the time now will build support for the future actions necessary to keep the program as close to the original schedule as possible.
2. Develop a new scenario that keeps the program on schedule and describes what revenue and/or capital cost savings are needed and when. We understand the ST3 ballot measure requires the Board to realign the program when it is unaffordable at both the regional and subarea level. This new scenario will give us collectively a roadmap for making project-level decisions, securing additional federal, state, or local funds in a timely manner, understanding and revising economic assumptions, responding to updated economic forecasts. We understand some of this work has already been done but adopting it along with a program realignment will give greater incentive and accountability for achieving it. Delaying the realignment action will also give more time for action on an infrastructure program, currently under consideration by U.S. Congress.
3. Define a more robust process for the proposed annual program review to evaluate whether project schedules can be advanced based on new revenue, cost and debt capacity information. This should include an opportunity to review scenarios or options for changing

delivery schedules and clear communication about where project-level decisions, or the lack thereof, are resulting in cost and schedule uncertainty.

4. Incorporate the recommendations of the independent cost consultant contract and lessons learned from meetings with partner agencies into the proposed realignment motion. In early 2021 significant cost increases on several projects were presented to the Board, which is now the largest contribution to the affordability gap. The independent cost estimate review consultant is still drafting recommendations for consideration by the Board at its June 24 meeting, just one month ahead of the proposed realignment action at the Board's July meeting.

We believe this work can be accomplished and still meet the schedule to update the agency's Transit Improvement Plan, 2022 budget, and finance plan by the end of the year.

Let us be clear. The business community supports Sound Transit's mission and the projects that make up the Sound Move, Sound Transit 2, and Sound Transit 3 programs. We actively supported the program development, advocated for voter approval, and will continue to advocate for federal and state funding solutions. That is why we are concerned about project delays or preemptive cost reductions, including limiting projects or changing station implementation. The region needs and deserves a high-quality transit system as part of our economic recovery from the pandemic. That is why we are asking for the Board to take the additional actions described in this letter.

We remain committed to actively engaging with you and the agency as we work toward solutions that deliver a high-capacity transit system for the Puget Sound region.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Garry Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "C".

Garry Clark
President & CEO
Economic Alliance Snohomish County



425.453.1223
 bellevuedowntown.com
 400 108th Ave NE, Suite 110
 Bellevue, WA 98004

June 24, 2021

Sound Transit Board of Directors
 401 S. Jackson St
 Seattle WA 98104-2826

Re: Support for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) – Program Realignment

Dear Chair Keel and Members of the Sound Transit Board of Directors,

On behalf of the Bellevue Downtown Association, we urge you to keep I-405 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on schedule. BRT is critical for supporting planned growth on the Eastside as the future north-south spine for transit service.

Much has happened in Bellevue since ST3 was approved by the voters on November 8, 2016. A Downtown land use code update was adopted in 2017, increasing density along I-405 and adding an affordable housing incentive. In 2018, a guiding vision was established to upzone and transform the commercial area east of Downtown Bellevue across I-405, supporting the potential to buildout of 4,500 new residential units. These decisions have sparked tremendous growth, with Downtown office space on course to nearly double its existing inventory and ~6,300 residential units under construction and planned. Those investments were made to support commitments by major employers bringing more than 30,000 jobs to Eastside by 2025. All these moves were made with the assumption BRT would be serve the Eastside by 2024.

A recent BDA survey on return-to-office trends completed by businesses with 18,599 employees reporting to Downtown Bellevue showed that maintaining BRT’s construction schedule is a priority for post-recession planning and supporting future growth capacity.

BRT Project	High Priority	Priority	Low Priority	Not Priority
North	16,868	1,244	407	80
South	14,550	2,560	1,266	223
Shoreline to Bothell	8,516	2,557	5,741	1,785
NE 85 St Inline Station	9,546	7,234	842	977

Survey results also showed prioritization for WSDOT’s plans to improve capacity at the SR 522 and SR 527 intersections on I-405. Delaying BRT would weaken funding opportunities to complete these projects which are vital to supporting BRT. This would create a disruptive pattern that could result in longer delays to BRT’s full vision.

ON EQUITY

Transit services are vital to serving populations priced out of housing where job opportunities thrive. As the City of Bellevue and its stakeholder community continue to address affordable housing issues with policy updates and investments, job opportunities spurred by Bellevue's growth must be accessible for people all income levels. Job seekers looking to Bellevue should never do a cost-benefit analysis to weigh traveling to work against their own professional growth. BRT is the reliable solution for creating an equitable north-south connection on the Eastside between jobs and people.

This past year has been difficult for transit agencies and transportation authorities. We understand revenue was greatly impacted and services needed to be prioritized to serve needs. As you discuss realignment, we urge you continue prioritizing services to meet needs. The Eastside needs BRT to remain on schedule.

Thank you for your attention and leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Jack', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Matt Jack
Public Policy Director
Bellevue Downtown Association