

8/12/2021 System Expansion Committee  
Meeting Written Public Comment  
Submissions

Submissions

**Martin Westerman**..... 2

*Martin Westerman*

**This comment was submitted in letter form, which is attached at the end of this document.**

Our submission for today's meeting. Thank you.

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To: Sound Transit Board members

From: West Seattle SkyLink Team

Date: August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021

We appreciate Sound Transit's focus on financial and environmental stewardship in its realignment process. As we mentioned last month, the public supports keeping ST3 on budget and on schedule.

Motion 43 calls for identifying value engineering possibilities, and we suggest that the Board consider some creative approaches reiterated on the [Seattle Transit Blog](#) that can help it deliver ST3 projects ahead of schedule and under budget. These include:

1. Simplifying the construction of a second downtown tunnel – by placing the new downtown tunnel next to the existing one, thereby getting free Mezzanines and street entrances, and
2. Using gondola technology for extensions and feeders.

Mexico City opened a system similar to SkyLink this month and expects 100,000 riders per day. Vancouver, B.C., found gondolas more economical than buses or light rail, and will be building an aerial gondola to connect Simon Fraser University with light rail and bus lines. Telluride, Colorado, eliminated its feeder bus line to the ski slope and replaced it with a gondola.

Sound Transit vetted aerial gondolas seven years ago, in its 2014 multi-mode study, as a high-capacity transit option for connecting local areas with the light rail spine.

We ask the board to complete the assessment it began in 2014, and appropriate funding (approximately \$200,000) for a technical study of a West Seattle gondola that will connect to Link in SODO and the International District. The study would allow Sound Transit to examine the SkyLink gondola proposal as a value engineering option and compare it to light rail alternatives being considered in the DEIS.