

12/2/2021 CEO Selection Committee
Meeting Written Public Comment
Submissions

Submissions

Matthew Sutherland – Transportation Choices Coalition 2

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The substance of this comment is within a letter which is attached to the end of this document.

Dear Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comment for tonight.

Attached is TCC's comments for priorities on the search for a new CEO.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration!

Respectfully,

Matthew J. Sutherland (he/him)

Advocacy Director

Transportation Choices

1402 3rd Ave #310

Seattle, WA 98101



Date: December, 2nd 2021
To: Sound Transit Board and Leadership
From: Transportation Choices Coalition
Re: CEO Search

Dear Sound Transit Board and Leadership,

We want to thank outgoing CEO Peter Rogoff for his many years of service to this region. Under his leadership, SoundTransit has delivered important transit service and adopted policies and projects that have advanced the Puget Sound's transit system through incredibly challenging times.

Leadership transitions are important moments for all organizations, and as partners committed to the success of regional transit service we want to express our priorities for the Sound Transit Board as you seek a new leader. Transportation Choices Coalition and our partners bring key values for hiring a new CEO - delivering voter-approved regional transit service as fast as possible, advancing racial equity, partnering with community, and transformatively planning for the future in all decision making processes.

- **Search Process.** We hope that the board and the recruiting firm conduct a national search that looks in unconventional places and includes those with lived experiences around transit, and with an emphasis on historically underrepresented communities and backgrounds. Equity staff and The Office of Civil Rights, Equity, and Inclusion should be included in any hiring processes/committees.
- **Sound Transit should commit to hiring a new CEO with a strong background and experience in racial and social equity.**
 - As Sound Transit continues to grow, any new CEO must be committed to using Race and Social Justice as a decision making lens to ensure Sound Transit is a tool for undoing harm and advancing racial equity throughout the region. A new CEO must be dedicated to Sound Transit's adopted equity policies, advancing existing work underway to establish an Anti-Racism Strategy, support the Office of Civil Rights, Equity and Inclusion, maintain and grow employee affinity groups, fully fund racial equity training for all staff and leadership, and champion the use of Racial Equity Toolkits.
 - We seek a CEO committed to expanding engagement with low-income communities, people of color, immigrants and refugees, and people with disabilities earlier in and throughout the planning process.
- **Sound Transit should commit to hiring a new CEO with a strong background and experience in multimodal access, affordable housing, and equitable TOD.**



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transit for all

minimum, yet we would like to see access as a priority that strives for excellence. We prioritize a CEO that invests in holistic, accessible access to high capacity transit via biking, walking, and rolling.

- We also want a new CEO who is ready to *Minimize and Fight Displacement*. A background in community development and land use rooted in the nuance of displacement is critical as the Puget Sound continues to grow. Sound Transit is a national leader in investing in affordable housing, and a new CEO should continue to work directly with the community to understand the anticipated impacts from infrastructure investments as well as the appropriate mitigation that retain community and maintain cultural cornerstones and businesses..
- A new CEO should be committed to *Prioritizing Affordable Housing* and building equitable transit-oriented developments as a critical role in preventing displacement and fighting climate change. Investment into Transit Oriented Development and multimodal access to high capacity transit centers should be a priority!
- All riders deserve to be safe when they choose transit, and we need a CEO that can ensure their safety. This includes safe traveling, improving emergency response procedures, safe local mode integration and design (in particular around intersections where trains and cars can meet), safe biking, rolling, and walking access to stations, and all riders should be safe from harassment.
- The new CEO must be able to work well with local organizations who advocate for riders, as well as local government authorities to ensure good inter-jurisdictional coordination. We need a CEO who is willing to prioritize and cultivate those relationships with longevity in mind in
- **Program Realignment.** The new CEO must be ready to engage with the current realignment plan, and be able to adhere to the Joint Proposal's timeline to deliver projects with minimal delay. Equity cannot be sacrificed to cut costs and a new CEO must continue to ensure that projects are delivered to all communities on time. We also are eager to see a CEO that aggressively pursues new revenue opportunities; with additional funding from the Federal Government through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, there is ample opportunity for a CEO to ensure financial solvency of Sound Transit for the future.
- We need a CEO that is visionary, and can **plan for the future**, including incorporating resilience to climate change and other unanticipated system stresses as a decision-making lens, and considers future land use that serves the needs of communities and connects Washington together. When evaluating decisions or projects, they should *always* make **equity, climate, and safety** top considerations. They should also be proactively thinking about the **rider experience**— building better communications with riders during emergencies, building better procedures to reintroduce service after emergencies, ensuring equipment including elevators and escalators are functioning consistently, and ensuring that riders have a seamless and



We would like to thank the Board for the opportunity to express priorities we hear from the community. A new CEO is more than just a new leader for Sound Transit, this person leads critical decisions that will impact the Puget Sound region for decades to come. We appreciate the opportunity to share our values as a priority for a new CEO, and look forward to working with them to achieve great and impactful outcomes for the people in this region.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Sutherland", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matthew Sutherland
Advocacy Director

On behalf of
Transportation Choices Coalition