

10/13/2022 System Expansion Committee  
Meeting Written Public Comment  
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## [Bill Hirt](#)

# What the New Sound Transit CEO Could Do

The previous post questioned why the Sound Transit Board had selected Julie Timm as their new CEO. If it's because she concurred with the Sound Transit "Transit Development Plan 2022-2077 they'll continue to "Plan, build, and operate the largest transit expansion in the nation" she will continue perpetrating what will inevitably be considered as one of the biggest boondoggles in transit history.

This post details a competent public transit CEO could avoid that debacle. Recognize public transit's goal should be to provide transit for those who can't drive or choose not to drive into Seattle and to reduce congestion for those who choose to drive. That reducing roadway congestion requires reducing vehicular traffic by attracting more commuters with access to routes and transit capacity into and out of Seattle.

A competent CEO would recognize the Sound Transit TDP for funding extending the Link does neither. It doesn't increase access with added parking or implement local routes from where commuters live to light rail stations. Instead continuing a decade of Sound Transit refusal to add parking despite a WSDOT OCT-DEC 2016 "Park and Ride Inventory" reporting all of the parking with access to transit was essentially already "in use".

A competent transit system CEO would also recognize the TDP funded extensions do nothing to increase public transit capacity. That transit capacity is determined by the number of vehicles per hour times the number of riders in each vehicle. Extending light rail tracks do nothing to increase either. Thus, a competent Julie Timm would recognize the folly of Sound Transit's TD prediction the light rail spine will increase annual ridership from 28,015,000 in 2022 to 73,756,000 in 2026.

Sound Transit compounds the problem by using light rail trains on the track extensions to replace bus routes and transit capacity into Seattle. The TDP reflects the result with plans to reduce Express Bus "Revenue Vehicle Miles" from 11,791,000 in 2023 to 8,755,000 in 2026 and Passenger Trips" dropping from 14,046,000 in 5,871,000.

The bottom line is reducing congestion into Seattle requires increasing the number of public transit commuters. Yet the TDP funded extensions do nothing to increase light rail capacity into the city. That using the light rail extensions to replace bus routes into Seattle reduces total transit capacity into the city. The more riders added by extensions the greater the capacity lost by current riders.

A competent transit CEO would recognize the Sound Transit TDP won't reduce congestion. The next System Expansion Committee meeting will indicate whether she does. If not, the East Link debut will demonstrate the result of the east side and south Seattle halving the DSTT trains. Central Link commuters will lose the capacity from half of the trains, east side bus commuters will lose all bus transit routes into Seattle.

A competent Julie Timm could hasten that result and save billions. Her response at the next Sound Transit System Expansion Committee meeting will be a clear indication of whether she will.