

06/12/2025 System Expansion Committee
Meeting Written Public Comment
Submissions

Submissions

Brien Chow	2
Olivia Ross	6
Bill Hirt	7
Ali Altaha	10
Comments received after the meeting's comment deadline	11
Riley Guerrero	11

Brien Chow

Public Comment by Brien Chow at Sound Transit System Expansion Committee Meeting, Thursday, 6/12/25 at Union Station, 1:30 p.m.

Good afternoon, Board Members,

I'm Brien Chow, Co-Founder of Transit Equity for All and Outreach Chair for the Chong Wa Benevolent Association.

At your recent board retreat... Chair Somers laid out six principles to guide Sound Transit's decisions...

Honor those principles by supporting the 4th Avenue Station.

It's what's best for the region
...keeping our light rail spine unified, not split apart and paralyzed.

It puts riders first... making transfers to Sounder, Amtrak, and buses, streetcar fast and accessible for all mobility abilities.

It reflects the CID majority... by keeping the Chinatown-International District connected, not isolated.

It shows responsible stewardship... spending wisely now to avoid bigger costs later.

It respects transparency... because voters and CID chose a Transit Hub station... not two scattered ones.

And it follows your own data...showing 4th Avenue has the best accessibility, connections, and performance.

***This decision will define your legacy. Stand by your principles...
not just in words, but in action...
and commit to building the 4th Avenue Station,
the only option that truly serves the people and the region.***

Move Forward on 4th and Stay Off 5th!

GO TO FOR INFORMATION... linktr.ee/TransitEquityforAll MFo4th

Good afternoon, Board Members,

I'm Brien Chow, Co-Founder of Transit Equity for All and Outreach Chair for the Chong Wa Benevolent Association.

At your recent board retreat... Chair Somers laid out six principles to guide Sound Transit's decisions...

Honor those principles by supporting the 4th Avenue Station.

It's what's best for the region

...keeping our light rail spine unified, not split apart and paralyzed.

It puts riders first... making transfers to Sounder, Amtrak, and buses, streetcar fast and accessible for all mobility abilities.

It reflects the CID majority... by keeping the Chinatown-International District connected, not isolated.

It shows responsible stewardship... spending wisely now to avoid bigger costs later.

It respects transparency... because voters and CID chose a Transit Hub station... not two scattered ones.

And it follows your own data...showing 4th Avenue has the best accessibility, connections, and performance.

This decision will define your legacy. Stand by your principles...

not just in words, but in action...

and commit to building the 4th Avenue Station,

the only option that truly serves the people and the region.

Move Forward on 4th and Stay Off 5th!

GO TO FOR INFORMATION... linktr.ee/TransitEquityforAll MFo4th

Written Comment by Brien Chow at Sound Transit System Expansion Committee Meeting, Thursday, 6/12/25 at Union Station, 1:30 p.m.

I'm Brien Chow, Co-Founder Transit Equity for All and Outreach Chair of the Chong Wa Benevolent Association of Washington State.

At your recent board retreat... Chair Somers laid out six principles to guide Sound Transit's decisions...

 **How the 4th Avenue Station Supports the 6 Principles**

1. Do What's Best for the Region as a Whole

- **4th Ave Station** keeps the **light rail spine unified**, avoiding a “broken spine” (*Split Spine*) that splits the system.
- It supports long-term system efficiency and **connects the largest number of people region wide**.
- **North/South CID** options fragment the system, harming future generations of riders.

2. Put Riders First

- 4th Ave location is **closest to existing transit hubs** (Union Station, Amtrak, Sounder, King County Metro).
- Offers the **fastest and easiest transfers**—saving time for riders every day.
- **North/South CID** stations require **longer walks and trip times, out of direction travel, extra transfers**—which especially impacts seniors, people with disabilities, and commuters.

3. Be Inclusive and Collaborative (Tell the Stories)

- 4th Ave Station allows **Chinatown-ID to stay connected**, instead of bypassing it.
- Supports the neighborhood's voice and **long-standing community history** of being a central transit hub.
- CID leaders have said they want **real transit, not exclusion**—this location respects that. The majority of CID organizations and individuals, as well as 6 legislative districts, support 4th

4. Responsible Stewardship

- 4th Ave may seem more costly up front, but avoids the **higher long-term costs** of poor transfers, lost ridership, and future retrofits.
- Investing wisely now avoids expensive fixes later.
- North/South CID options are **cheaper only in the short term** but cost more in regional mobility and lost access and lost economic activities.

5. Accountable and Transparent

- 4th Ave aligns with **what voters believed they were approving**—a unified station in the CID, not split stations far apart.
- Keeps promises made during ST3 that the CID community has a choice of 4th or 5th. We overwhelmingly chose 4th.

- North/South CID alignment was **not clearly communicated**, and many board members and the public are still confused by the changes: deletion of Midtown at Madison and the promised 4th Avenue Transit Hub for inefficient Midtown James Street and South of CID Dearborn that has the platform farther to the south. That is not transparency!

6. Use Data-Based Decision Making

- Data shows the **highest transfer volumes and ridership** will occur at a station near 4th Ave.
- Studies and models show **better performance for system-wide connectivity** with 4th Avenue alignment.
- Ridership drop from poor transfers at North/South CID is measurable and concerning.

Summary

Choosing the **4th Avenue Station** meets all 6 of Sound Transit's own principles. It creates a better experience for riders, builds a stronger region-wide system, and honors the commitment to the Chinatown-ID community. North/South CID may save money now—but will **cost more in lost equity, ridership, and regional access to economic benefits and opportunities**.

Move Forward on 4th! and Stay Off 5th! Thank you.

GO TO FOR INFORMATION... linktr.ee/TransitEquityforAll_MFo4th

Olivia Ross

Sound Transit Board Meeting Comments,
Dear Sound Transit Board,

You are faced with a pivotal decision today. What is more important to you: building a world class transit system that delivers on your promise to voters, or doing Amazon a favor?

The \$500 million to \$1 billion that suddenly materialized for a “shifted west” alignment that builds a worse system for transit riders could instead deliver a world-class transit hub on 4th Avenue in the CID as neighborhood advocates have been fighting for.

Asian-American elders have been showing up, over and over, to your board meetings to demand a regional hub station on 4th Avenue in CID, and they have been told there simply is not enough money. When Amazon shows up to one meeting, suddenly this Board can find the money to do large corporate interests a favor, even though it delays opening Link and makes the transit system less useful for transit riders. Does the Board prioritize the interests of transit riders and the CID community, or Amazon’s desire to avoid minor and mitigated construction effects on Westlake Avenue south of Denny Way, which drivers use infrequently?

We urge the Sound Transit Board to follow its staff’s recommendation to move forward with the current preferred alternative in SLU, and not pursue the “shifted west” alignment.

If the Sound Transit Board has suddenly found hundreds of millions of dollars, we urge the Board to use it to Move Forward on 4th Avenue in the CID, building the best station for many decades of future regional transit ridership. Why is the Board even considering wasting time and money to build a worse transit system?

Please do the right thing and fulfill your promises to your voters.

Sincerely,

Olivia Ross

livannross@gmail.com

, 98102

Bill Hirt

Dear ST System Expansion Committee;

The below post from my blog <http://stopeastlinknow.blogspot.com> details why more tests won't fix Line 2's real problem.

Bill Hirt

Sound Transit has once again decided to delay the East Link extension across the I-90 Bridge. Revenue service which had been previously scheduled for June 2021, delayed until late 2025, has now been scheduled for January 16, 2026. Again, with the following proviso:

Achieving that date is heavily dependent on how the next few months go, as the agency conducts robust testing on the first light rail line to cross a floating bridge anywhere in the world.

The light rail line/floating bridge issue had resulted in the Legislature Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) commissioning an Independent Review Team. In 2012, four years after the 2008 IRT had recommended “careful study and testing in the early stages of the project”, Sound Transit signed a \$28M (later \$36M) contract with Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB) to finish the design.

They demonstrated the design at the Transportation Technology Center in Pueblo, Colo. The tests, conducted during the summer and fall of 2013, were reported to be a success with claims their design passed with “flying colors”.

The delay from the June 2021 revenue service date to late 2025 was due to the need to redo the attachments between light rail tracks and bridge structure. Some of the attachments apparently need additional work. A March 7th Seattle Times Traffic Lab article also raised concerns due to the sensitivity of Sound Transit’s “Rail-to-Ground” selection for power system

While faulty rail attachments can presumably be repaired, it's unclear how an additional month of testing could resolve the “sensitivity-of-the-power-system” problem. The Starter Line pre-debut testing resulted in limiting train speeds to avoid violating Bellevue Noise Codes. The additional time and testing may result in lower Line 2 speeds between South Bellevue and International District that could alleviate attachment concerns and power system sensitivity.

One of the reasons “the date is dependent on how the next months go” is presumably due to the need to ensure that Line 2 trains can safely merge with the Line 1 trains prior to going through DSTT. Sound Transit funded a PSRC study in 2004 that concluded safe operation required a minimum of 4 minutes between trains. How does Sound Transit assure a minimum of 4 minutes between Line 2 trains from Redmond and Line 1 trains initially returning from Angel Lake, later from Federal Way, and eventually from Tacoma.

One of the things, “*how the next few months go*”, can’t change is the cost of routing Line 2 the 18-mile route from Downtown Redmond Station (DRS) to the International District Station (IDS). At \$30 per vehicle revenue mile, the 18-mile link costs \$1080 per vehicle for a DRS to-and-from IDS route.

Providing half the capacity to and from Lynnwood would presumably require 4-car Line 2 trains. Thus, each DRS-to-IDS round trip would add \$4,320 to daily operating cost. Maintaining the current schedule, trains every 10 minute for 16 hours, requires 96 round trips for a \$414,720 weekday cost..

The question being how many boardings will the DRS-to-IDS route attract. A May 10th Seattle Times Traffic Lab column had touted, “What you’ll find at Redmond’s new light rail stations, connecting parks, restaurants, and more, should make the Eastside 2 Lanes now-empty trains more versatile”. Sound Transit had estimated that next winter, when people can ride light rail into Seattle, 5700 riders will use the two stations daily.

The May 22 Sound Transit Board meeting heralded the DRS-to-South Bellevue route's success but nothing about actual boardings. Those won’t be available until Sound Transit releases their monthly Ridership—Ridership report for May and June.

However, a May 20th visit to the Marymore Village Garage, (after breakfast at Redmond Pancake House) found fewer than 50 vehicles in the 1400-stall facility. Thus whatever riders were added at the DRS that day, the Downtown Redmond Extension ridership was a tiny fraction of the 5700 expected when they are able to go into Seattle. Another demonstration that providing access to light rail trains doesn’t assure ridership.

It's not clear how many additional commuters will be attracted to Line 2 when it traverses I-90 bridge. Sound Transit plans to require current bus riders transfer to Line 2 for the commute into and out of Seattle.

The bottom line is the “next few months of testing” won’t change the fact that Sound Transit should have never been allowed to confiscate the I-90 Bridge center roadway for light rail trains. That doing so precluded two-way BRT routes with 10 times the capacity, 10 years sooner, at 1/10th the cost.

At this point, the only way to mitigate the damage is to terminate Line 2 at the existing IDS. Allow its operation to be set by eastside transit demands and for Line 1 to meet transit needs to Federal Way.

Again, no amount of testing will “fix” that need.

Ali Altaha

Note: This comment in its entirety can be found at the end of the document.

Comments received after the meeting's comment deadline

Riley Guerrero

Esteemed Members of the System Expansion Committee,

Pierce County Housing Authority (PCHA) is again offering comment to this committee regarding the preliminary proposed light rail expansion. PCHA is an affordable housing provider in Pierce County that owns and operates 727 apartments across ten communities, as well as a federal Housing Choice Voucher Program. We are here today because our largest community, Chateau Rainier, is directly bordered by - and quite possibly in the path of - the proposed routes continuing the Light Rail from Fife Station to the Portland Avenue Station.

PCHA is excited for the expansion of the light rail to our community, and cheers that it will open doors for us and our neighbors to more easily use public transit to access employment, connect with community, and navigate the South Sound without having to rely on a car. We continue to see this expansion as a great benefit to our County, and we were thrilled to realize that 248 of our families would soon be within walking distance of the Fife Station of a robust regional light rail system. However, we learned only through our partners at the City of Fife that one of the proposed routes would come through the backside of our property, causing major disruption to our residents during construction and complicating our long-term plans for the property.

PCHA was in pre-development for a Low-Income Housing Tax Credit rehabilitation of Chateau Rainier, which, to this point, we have operated as a naturally-occurring affordable housing complex without federal grants or investiture. This complete renovation of the property – including siding, roofing, structural work, systems improvements, and the interior renovation of our units – has been determined necessary and imminent to preserve this housing for another thirty years in service for our community, and to improve the conditions of the property for our residents. However, we have received communication from our potential Tax Credit investor partners that despite this project's strengths, they are unwilling to invest in the community given the uncertainty around the eminent domain, project impacts, and the fact that it is impossible for us to put together a 15-year projection of how much land will be contained in the deal by its end. There is no route forward until we understand if we will be able to get answers from Sound Transit staff that could satisfy investors after the June 26th vote, or if staff will not be able to provide those assurances and numbers until the final Environmental Impact Study and Construction workplan is completed – years down the line. This has forced us to put this necessary revitalization of the community on an indefinite hold. Our funding, however, is not able to be placed on the same hold. Because of this, we are attempting an eleventh-hour pivot to use this funding on the rehabilitation of another set of communities, but we have lost significant time before our scheduled bond cap allocation comes due. We have also scrapped a significant and expensive gamut of pre-development work, which will need to be redone when the project restarts. Moreover, and most importantly, the residents of Chateau Rainier are being made yet again to wait for funding to become available for the improvements that are necessary to preserve their homes.

Pierce County Housing Authority is still excited about the possibilities that will be brought to our region by the light rail. However, we reiterate that we do not want to see this project be balanced on

the backs of the residents of affordable housing. The dark and disparate legacy of infrastructural megaprojects is one that we hope the light rail seeks to eschew, and not carry down the rails in this system extension. We look forward to being made an active partner to this Board, and continue our hopes that work will be done collaboratively to ensure that the sacrifices that our community has already been asked to bear in the delivery of this vital public service be made whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Riley Guerrero

Policy and Strategy Manager

(She/Her)

Pierce County Housing Authority

253.620.5478 Direct | 253.620.5445 Fax
11515 Canyon Road E. | Puyallup, WA 98373
pchawa.org





In the construction industry, we rely on a variety of tools to deliver complex programs—MATOC is one of the most powerful among them. Yet, the term MATOC often elicits mixed reactions, largely due to a lack of understanding about how the process works and the substantial benefits it offers.

With over 30 years of experience—beginning as a public agency employee and now serving as a seasoned PM/CM consultant—I can confidently say that MATOC provides significant advantages, both as a project delivery tool and as forward-thinking public policy.

Programmatic Flexibility

1. MATOC offers unmatched flexibility for agencies like Sound Transit, especially when administering a \$30–40 billion capital program. Traditional procurement for each individual project demands significant time and staffing resources. MATOC streamlines this process, enabling faster project delivery and reducing overhead costs—ultimately freeing up more funding and staffing for additional projects.
2. Empowerment of Small Businesses
As a strong advocate for small businesses, I've seen firsthand how SBEs are often brought onto teams in name only, without meaningful work or growth opportunities. MATOC disrupts this dynamic. It gives SBEs a path to prime contracts, where they can lead work, build capacity, and chart their own course based on performance—not politics. It expands equitable economic inclusion and drives job creation across our communities.
3. Breaking the Status Quo
Many public agencies have become overly reliant on a small circle of large consultants. This comfort zone has, over time, stifled innovation, diluted accountability, and shut out an entire ecosystem of highly qualified professionals. MATOC breaks down those barriers and opens the door to a broader, more competitive field, ensuring that quality, capability, and equity lead the way.

I speak from direct experience managing a MATOC contract for a major public agency, and I understand both the policy framework and operational realities involved. Based on this professional assessment, I have full confidence in Sound Transit leadership of Ms. Terri Mestas, Deputy CEO, and her distinguished delivery team, as they bring Sound Transit's MATOC V-2 across the finish line—hopefully with a significant Board approval milestone on June 26, 2025.

Ali Altaha
(510) 812-5210