

12/11/2025 System Expansion Committee
Meeting Written Public Comment
Submissions

Submissions

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Jackie Oliver

Sound Transit Board Meeting Comments,

Dear Sound Transit Board Members,

Sound Transit must build Ballard Link Extension stations under 4th Ave in CID, at Madison Street in Midtown, and at 7th and Harrison in SLU. We are writing to you today to urge you to put an end to the plan to start over on the Ballard to Downtown Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that requires over \$100 million extra in direct costs, adds two years of delay in planning work, and increases the likelihood of future delays in opening the project.

The voters approved major expansion in 2016, and expect you to deliver it. Since then, we have participated in years of process and community engagement which produced the options already available to the board. Do we really have to wait even longer to finally ride a system we are paying for? It's time for the Sound Transit Board to choose from the existing Ballard Link Extension options.

Stopping the new EIS means stopping the deletion of three of the highest ridership stations in the system: Chinatown International District, Midtown, and South Lake Union Stations. Stopping the new EIS means maintaining the high ridership system this entire region voted for in 2016.

A new EIS will take years to complete and is likely to waste of hundreds of millions of dollars in direct and indirect costs, when all is said and done. All in the interest of putting forth worse options that fewer people will use. More self-inflicted delays are unacceptable on their own, but these are costly self-inflicted delays with an end goal of justifying bad decisions.

Do not permanently destroy our transit system out of short sighted priorities. Stop wasting time and money on endless process, choose existing options, and stop the new EIS before it starts.

Sincerely,

Jackie D. Oliver, Tacoma WA.

Jackie Oliver

hiphopcherryop9@gmail.com

4047 S G Street.

Tacoma, Washington 98418-6638

Mark Olsoe

Hello Sound Transit SYSTEM EXPANSION COMMITTEE and CEO Dow Constantine,

Now that the enormity of the disruptions of the light rail plan to extend Sound Transit to West Seattle are coming to light, its time to reconsider the SkyLink option. Remember the saying, "There's never time to do it right, but always time to do it over (and then hopefully right)". I have been one of many who have been advocating for the SkyLink option. We have never gotten a straight answer or even any kind of answer from Sound Transit that I know of. I'm an engineer and without a response with an accompanying analysis, I'm feeling like this very well thought out and possible very superior alternative has been brushed aside without due consideration. And especially now that I'm finding about the massive disruptions that are going to go on for years, I'm SUPER FRUSTRATED!!!

Please go to <https://www.westseattleskylink.org/> and look through the comparisons while pretending that you live in West Seattle to understand why I'm so frustrated.

Thank you, West Seattleite Mark Olsoe

Marvin Cao

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Sincerely,

Marvin Cao

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Seattle, Washington 98144

Betty Lau

**Written Public Comment by Betty Lau for System Expansion
Committee Meeting, Thursday, Dec. 11, 2025, 12:30-1:30 p.m.,
Union Station**

Hello, I'm Betty Lau, member of the Sound Transit Citizens Accessibility Advisory Committee (CAAC) and co-founder of Transit Equity for All (TEA).

Thank you for the greater transparency and start of improvements in the Accessibility Committee. We are now asked for input into agendas and we are getting meeting minutes every two months. An enterprising committee member took the initiative to find the Missing Accessibility Charter and later, the public disclosure people came through with it. Virtually none of the Charter is being followed!

More improvements are needed. In the staff presentation on Oct. 7, we heard extremely sparse information. We did not even have the benefit of a power point auditorily described for us, as Chief Economic and Civil Rights Officer Cross did in her excellent November presentation introducing her department. It's a model for other staff presentations on making power points accessible to all.

- Questions asked on Oct. 7 remained unanswered, despite being asked again at the Dec. 2 meeting. That makes **4 months of waiting**. It will be **6 months by the time of the next meeting, assuming the unanswered questions won't be left off the agenda again**. The three questions asked by 3 different committee members on Oct. 7, requested by a 4th person to be answered at the Dec. 2 are:
 1. "Why is one station called Midtown when it's not in Midtown? It's confusing."
 2. "How many transfers are there, and what are the walk times [for N&S of CID compared to other alternatives]?"

3. “How will you help those with disabilities who have limited or no English during emergencies?”

No answers were provided at the Dec. 7 meeting.

Suggestion: Bring back the presenter and an engineer to answer these 3 questions at the February 2026 meeting because:

- a. Waiting 6 months for answers is inefficient and unreasonable.
- b. Therefore, **we need monthly meetings**, like the other Sound Transit committees to cut down on delays between questions and answers, receive minutes in a timely manner, to keep up with the Enterprise Initiative, the upcoming BLE DEIS, and other on-going changes.
- c. It’s also a matter of **equity with other Sound Transit committees that meet monthly**.

Capacity issues: staff say monthly meetings are difficult because there’s so much to do.

- a. There used to be three facilitators; one is gone; Fill the third position. It’s been vacated since June 2025.
 - Hire a 4th person, if necessary, from the Government and Community Relations budget (for Accessibility Community Engagement).
- b. Adequate staffing of the Accessibility committee should be a top priority. Whether by care giving for young or old, accident, crashes, being in the wrong place at the wrong time or just aging, everyone benefits from Accessibility.
- c. Meeting minutes are provided two months later. This is not conducive to timeliness. Monthly meetings would take care of this issue.
- d. Voting: Although decision making is not covered in the Charter, a vote was called in the last few minutes of the meeting when several had already left. Hold votes earlier and after committee discussion.
 - A vote was called on whether meetings should be open to the public or closed in order for committee members to speak of their own medical situation.
 - **Accessibility meetings need to be open, like other Sound Transit committees.**
 - People who do not want others to know their medical conditions can reword, for example:
 - i. People with diabetes need.....

- ii. This won't work for those with glaucoma....
- iii. This works/isn't effective because....
- And if all else fails, they should speak privately to a facilitator about their situation for a personalized solution.

Sound Transit sub-committees should all be public or all closed as a matter of equity because all committees need to be accessible. If I attend a Diversity Committee meeting and need to speak about my medical conditions, I will reword. I don't expect the meeting to be closed.

It's easier for me, with the not-to-be shared private information, to reword my statements than to expect Sound Transit to come up with agreed upon privacy and confidentiality rules to ensure only the "right" people hear my confidential information.

Finally, I am encouraged the CAAC is on the right track. What we're having now are growing pains that we will work through, transparently, and in the spirit of the ST Board's Six Principles, the "continuous improvement," CEO Constantine has ordered and King County Executive Zahilay has pledged: "Efforts will continue to prioritize serving riders who depend on Sound Transit's services, *including seniors, people with disabilities, Title VI protected populations (race, color, national origin), low-income and limited-English-proficiency populations*" (D2 newsletter, Oct. 31, 2025, emphasis mine).

Aforethought, not afterthought!

Thank you.

Comments received after the meeting's comment deadline

Krishna Adettiwar

Congratulations on the Federal Way extension. I had nose surgery a few days prior, but was too excited to skip it and enjoyed every moment of the opening. Thank you, the team, and partners for all the hard work on this project.

In regards to the second downtown tunnel for the West Seattle to Ballard line (WSBLE), I'm excited at the plausibility of running all three lines within our existing tunnel by using newer signaling technology and upgrading our infrastructure. However, this will put immense pressure on one point of the system and will cripple our entire regional network every time something goes wrong or we need maintenance in the tunnel, introducing a very critical single point of failure.

Although hard to imagine in the US, building fast, safe, reliable rapid transit at-grade is common all over Europe. I recently came back from a trip from Zürich, perhaps the world's best tram city, and was blown away by how powerful at-grade rail transit can be and how we are making some very fundamentally wrong design choices.

I encourage the committee to explore an at-grade segment through downtown for the WSBLE section, knowing the following facts:

1. Building at-grade is 4-10x cheaper than underground in Seattle. We can save many billions.
2. The average speed through our current underground downtown tunnel is 9mph, including stops. Zürich runs their Line 4 tram through their very dense downtown at-grade at 10mph, including stops.
3. It takes 3 minutes to get to platform and vice versa (to get back to the surface) for Seattle downtown trips. This means that a 6 minute rail ride through downtown actually takes 12 minutes due to lost time getting to and from the platform. Well designed at-grade transit is *faster*, especially for short trips. For longer trips, if we can run trains at 10mph on average through downtown on an at-grade segment, it will be just as fast as our current downtown tunnel while achieving billions in savings.
4. If we build this down 1st, 4th, or 6th Ave through downtown, it also revitalizes the urban fabric of these important streets and removes the need to ever build the Culture Connector (we hit two birds with one stone!). We can build a pedestrian friendly light-rail only linear park along the street, with tons of public and green space, outdoor restaurant seating, and more. This can become a European-style pedestrian tram street which doesn't exist anywhere in the US or Canada. It would become a tourist attraction in its own right, similar to what happened with George Street in Sydney, Australia.
5. We will no longer have a single point of failure with two options for rail through downtown.

I strongly encourage the board to consider a high-quality at-grade segment through downtown given the immense, undeniable, and demonstrated benefits. These are not a radical concepts; it is commonplace along the great tram networks in famous cities like Amsterdam, Milan, Zürich, Paris.

Please reach out to coolkrish1997@gmail.com to discuss this further. Thank you to all your hard work on the expansion.

Thank you,
Krishna Adettiwar