

*01/15/2026 Rider Experience and
Operations Committee Meeting Written
Public Comment Submissions*

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Port of Seattle

Note: The letter mentioned in this comment can be found at the end of this document.

To the Sound Transit Board of Directors:

Attached is our letter of support for the 2026 Service Plan update, from the Port of Seattle Executive Director. He especially highlights the Overnight bus service along the Link corridors (which will provide access for passengers and employees needing to get to the airport during the overnight Link shutdown), and also the Route 574 and Route 560 continuation. Early morning/overnight service is vital to SEA airport.

We would like this letter to be published as part of public comment when staff presents on the 2026 Service Plan, which we understand will be for the Jan. 15 Rider Experience & Operations Committee meeting.

We look forward to continuing our working partnership with Sound Transit.

Thank you, Geri Poor

Geraldine Poor, AICP

Regional Transportation Senior Manager

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Port of Seattle | PO Box 1209 | Seattle, WA 98111

Unnamed Commenter

Hello,

I am writing as a frequent flier and regular rider of ST 574 to voice my strong opposition to the plan to terminate this route at Federal Way.

As someone who relies on the 574 to reach Sea-Tac Airport, the proposed truncation would fundamentally break the utility of this service for me. Please consider the practical reality of this change:

1. The Luggage Factor: I typically travel with one piece of luggage, and occasionally two. The current 574 service is excellent because it drops me at the terminal curb, right next to checkpoint 1. Forcing a rider with multiple bags to navigate a transfer at Federal Way—and then hike the long distance from the Link station through the Sea-Tac parking garage—is a significant physical burden.

2. The "Last Mile" Distance: The Link station is far less convenient than the 574 bus stop. The walk from the train is farther; for a frequent traveler, that added time and effort makes the "transit" option far less competitive than a ride-share or personal vehicle.

3. Environmental Impact: If this change goes into effect, I will stop using transit and start using rideshare to the airport. This adds another vehicle to the already congested I-5 corridor and increases carbon emissions—outcomes that directly contradict Sound Transit's mission to reduce traffic and pollution.

A "one-seat ride" that drops passengers at the terminal doors is the only way to keep frequent fliers out of their cars. I urge you to preserve the direct 574 connection from Pierce County to Sea-Tac Airport.

Anita Belcher

I am writing on behalf of numerous commuters who utilize the southbound Bus 574 from the airport at 4:39 PM. The availability of the 1 Line to Federal Way has improved our transportation options. However, many of us try to catch the Link Light Rail departing at 4:38 pm, but often miss the southbound Bus 574 by about 30 seconds. We observe the bus leaving as we descend the escalator, resulting in an additional 30-minute wait for the next bus to Tacoma, which is the same one we have been catching regularly at 4:39 PM from the airport. This situation is concerning, as the 574 route to Tacoma that leaves Federal Way at 5:19 could easily delay departure slightly to allow passengers to board without inconvenience, rather than forcing us to wait outside in cold conditions for an extended period. Although we are pleased that the 1 Line now serves Federal Way, the benefit is diminished if we must wait outside in unfavorable weather to catch the same bus, especially when we could have remained warm had we succeeded in boarding directly at the airport.

Please know that we sincerely appreciate all of your dedicated efforts and sincerely wish to utilize the additional benefits offered. Thank you for taking the time to listen to our concerns and consider our perspective.

Sincerely,

Anita Belcher

Phone: 206-235-5619

December 5, 2025

Board of Directors
Sound Transit
401 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: Support for 2026 Service Plan Update: ST Express—Q4 Public Engagement

Dear Board of Directors:

On behalf the Port of Seattle (Port), thank you for advancing the proposed 2026 Service Plan and ST Express service proposals that support airport transit users at SEA Airport and the surrounding urban center. As the owner of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA), we value our longstanding partnership with Sound Transit in improving airport transit service for both passengers and employees. We know firsthand that reliable transit is not a convenience, but a necessity for airport passengers and employees who rely on it, and I urge adoption of the proposed 2026 Service Plan Update.

We strongly urge adoption of the plan with the ST Express proposal, with emphasis on the following components critical to supporting Port effort to incentivize airport employee commute trip reduction:

- **Overnight Service** – We fully endorse the addition of overnight bus service along Link corridors. No longer will airport riders find themselves “stranded without transit” during the midnight to 5 a.m. link light rail overnight shutdown.
- **Route 574 Lakewood/Tacoma/Federal Way service**—During regular day hours, maintain service between Lakewood, Tacoma, and the new Federal Way Light Rail station. This route has the highest ridership of regional bus lines serving the airport.
- **Route 560 Continuation**—Continue direct service connecting Bellevue and Burien with the SEA Airport Drives. This frequent one-seat, direct airport service remains vital.

To elaborate on our support, we provide additional background.

Additional Background

SeaTac/Airport station has seen record ridership in 2025, averaging 12,000 daily boardings (Apr–Oct) which is double 2019 levels. It is currently the second busiest station after Westlake, and in 2024 it was the busiest station in the system overall.¹

Today, about 10 percent of our passengers and 20 percent of airport workers arrive using public transit (via both light rail and buses). We aim to grow these shares and the service enhancements

¹ Sound Transit ridership data on average daily boardings per station: <https://www.soundtransit.org/ride-with-us/system-performance-tracker/ridership>

proposed in the 2026 Service Plan Update are essential to supporting passengers and employees who must travel outside the peak commute hours, such as catching a 5 a.m. departing flight, starting a 4 a.m. shift, or heading home after midnight.

Reducing single-occupancy vehicle travel is a core Port priority and key to achieving a variety of our goals, including operational efficiency; environmental sustainability; worker recruitment and retention; and traffic congestion reduction.² The Port pursues these goals through multiple strategies focused on both passengers and airport workers. Transit is the linchpin of this strategy: expanding service is essential to increasing these shares and supporting airport workers.

SEA is one of Washington's largest employment centers, with over 27,000 active employee security badges representing more than 800 separate companies. Many shifts begin before the 6 AM transit peak service or extend well past the PM commute, requiring reliable transit beyond standard commute hours. Across International Boulevard, additional airport-oriented businesses in the City of SeaTac also depend on late and early transit access.

In 2024, the Port Commission directed³ staff to expand alternative transportation options for airport workers through the SEA Moves transportation management association (TMA). Initiatives would include a pilot program to provide free or low-cost ORCA cards to a subset of eligible employees at SEA, studying a dedicated SEA-employee commuter bus program, and on-going reporting and data analysis. These efforts depend on robust public transit service to serve the ORCA card users.

We look forward to collaborating with Sound Transit staff on implementation issues such as overnight service frequency and bus-stop locations. Our shared successes – from extending Link Light Rail to the airport in 2009, and extending farther south since then, to reopening the International Boulevard Pedestrian Bridge – demonstrate the strength of our partnership. Together, we are already preparing for the 2026 FIFA World Cup games with global attention and increased transit demand to our region.

Thank you again for your leadership and for recognizing the critical role transit—and overnight service--plays in the success of SEA and our region. We look forward to our continuing our partnership for SEA passengers and employees.

Sincerely,



Stephen P. Metruck
Executive Director

² 2019 Resolution 3759 – the Ground Transportation Policy Directive.

³ Order No. 2024-13 – SEA Public Transit Pilot Program.