

01/22/2026 Board of Directors Meeting

Written Public Comment Submissions

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Robert Lindenhoverius

Mr. Robert (Bob) Lindenhoverius

Snohomish County Resident

Retired Veteran

Former/ Retired Boeing Employee

Email: Lindenhoverius@comcast.net

Date: January 14th 2026

Submitted for inclusion in the official Sound Transit Board meeting packet and public record

Members of the Sound Transit Board of Directors,

I am writing as a Snohomish County resident, a retired veteran, and a long-time Boeing employee to provide formal public comment regarding the Everett Link Extension proposals currently under consideration as part of Sound Transit 3.

Snohomish County residents have paid into the Sound Transit system for decades. Yet today, our county has only two light-rail stations, while continuing to bear a substantial portion of the tax burden that funds regional transit expansion. That imbalance is important context for evaluating whether the current proposal delivers proportional benefit to the taxpayers who support the system.

I want to be clear at the outset: I understand the logic behind the current Everett Link routing and the station-by-station approach that has been proposed. I recognize the planning effort, community input, and technical challenges involved. This comment is not submitted in opposition to that work.

Rather, I respectfully urge the Board to **direct Sound Transit staff to develop and present a parallel alternative:**

a direct, nonstop underground light-rail connection between Everett Station and Lynnwood City Center, running safely beneath the I-5 corridor, with no intermediate stations.

Sound Transit has successfully used tunnel boring machines in prior projects, including University Link and Northgate Link. These projects demonstrated that complex underground construction is feasible in our region. I also understand that tunnel boring machines are typically procured or adapted for specific projects and are not retained in long-term storage once construction is complete. That reality should be incorporated into early planning so that costs, engineering requirements, and timelines can be evaluated transparently alongside surface and elevated options.

A direct underground alternative merits serious study for several reasons:

- Equity for Snohomish County taxpayers who fund the system but receive limited direct benefit
- Substantially improved travel times and reliability
- Reduced surface and neighborhood disruption

- Increased long-term system resilience and regional capacity
- Clear, side-by-side cost comparisons with incremental surface expansion

As a retired veteran, I was trained to think in terms of redundancy, resilience, and mission effectiveness. As a long-time Boeing employee, I worked in an environment where engineering solutions were evaluated based on performance, safety, and long-term value—not solely on precedent.

There is also a personal reality that I cannot ignore. Based on current timelines, I will likely be in my late 70s or 80s by the time the Everett Link Extension is fully implemented. That reality applies to many long-term taxpayers in Snohomish County. A direct, reliable, nonstop connection matters greatly to residents who may no longer be able to navigate multiple stops, transfers, or extended travel times.

I am not asking the Board to abandon the current proposal. I am asking that Sound Transit uphold transparency and fairness by ensuring that a **true underground express alternative** is formally studied and presented, allowing the public and the Board to evaluate all reasonable options.

Snohomish County deserves more than a single path forward. We deserve options that reflect both what we pay and how we live.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this comment for inclusion in the official record and Board packet. (**See Attached**)

Respectfully,

Mr. Robert (Bob) Lindenholvius

Technical Appendix (Informational – Not a Design Proposal)

- **Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs):** Previous Sound Transit tunnels (University Link and Northgate Link) utilize single-bore TBMs with diameters generally in the range of approximately 21–22 feet for light-rail operations. TBMs are typically procured or leased on a project-specific basis and are not retained in long-term storage after project completion.
- **Express Operations Concept:** A direct Everett–Lynnwood tunnel could function as a nonstop express segment within the regional system, bypassing intermediate stations while complementing, not replacing, local service.
- **Preliminary Travel-Time Consideration:** A nonstop underground alignment following the I-5 corridor (approximately 14–15 miles) could potentially reduce Everett–Lynnwood travel time to roughly 12–15 minutes, depending on operating assumptions—significantly faster than multi-stop surface or elevated alternatives.
- **Planning Value:** Studying this alternative would allow Sound Transit and the Board to compare lifecycle cost, construction risk, operational efficiency, rider benefit, and long-term system resilience against currently proposed alignments.

Service maps | Sound Transit as of Jan 2026

Sound Transit Service (Everett Proposed)



Sound Transit Service (Everett Direct)



Bryan Green

Sound Transit Board,
Please pass along this comment to the Board during their meeting on 1/22.

I am writing to express my extreme displeasure and deep frustration with the recent proposal to significantly reduce the scope and utility of the planned Avalon Station in West Seattle. As a resident of West Seattle, I have followed the light rail project for years with the understanding that this investment would meaningfully improve mobility, reduce congestion, and support the growing community around the Avalon corridor. The newly proposed reduction of the Avalon Station undermines those goals and disregards the needs of thousands of current and future riders who depend on reliable and accessible transit options.

Avalon is a dense, diverse, and rapidly expanding area. Weakening this station's design is not just a minor adjustment, it is a consequential setback that will impact commute times, neighborhood connectivity, property values, and the long-term success of the West Seattle extension. Many of us supported this project, even through cost overruns and delays, because we believed Sound Transit was committed to delivering a functional and high-quality station that met the needs of the community. The current proposal betrays that commitment and opens up Sound Transit to legal liability.

I urge Sound Transit to reconsider this decision, engage transparently with affected residents, and restore the Avalon Station to a level that reflects its importance within the system. West Seattle deserves a station that will serve the community for generations—not a compromised version that shortchanges the neighborhood from day one.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing how Sound Transit plans to address these concerns and ensure that the Avalon Station remains a meaningful part of the West Seattle Link Extension.

Sincerely,
Bryan Green
West Seattle Resident

Brien Chow

Written Public Comment by Brien Chow at Sound Transit Board Meeting, January 22, 2026, Union Station, 1:30 p.m.

I'm Brien Chow, co-founder of Transit Equity for All.

Selective Logic Is Systemic Racism — and the Second Tunnel Proves It
Members of the Board,

The issue before you is not engineering.

It is governance—and whether Sound Transit applies its rules equally.

What we are seeing is **selective urgency, selective discipline, and selective respect**. That pattern produces **systemic racism**, even when no one names it.

The Seattle Racial Equity Toolkit says...
racism, whether intentional or unintentional, must be addressed and ended.

1. Urgency, Only After the Damage Is Done

You now cite Technical Advisory Group (TAG) recommendations to demand “no delays” in the Chinatown–International District.

- But this Board authorized **more than three years of CID-specific delays**, studying alternatives the community repeatedly rejected.
- Those delays occurred during historic construction inflation and **directly caused today's cost crisis**.

*You cannot invoke urgency now to silence the very community harmed by your own decisions... That is not accountability - **it is reversal of responsibility.***

2. Clarity for Tourists, Delay for Community Identity

Sound Transit speedily renamed University Street Station to Symphony Station for tourist/visitor clarity.

Yet you have stalled for decades on correctly naming the Chinatown–International District station...

treating cultural identity as optional, complex, or low priority.

This contrast is not trivial.

It shows whose clarity matters... and whose identity... and self-determination can wait.

3. “Too Expensive” — Only When It’s the CID

You claim the \$800 million 4th Avenue station, preferred by the CID, is unaffordable.

At the same time, you are allowing:

- \$7.5+ billion in West Seattle overruns
- A \$30–35 billion systemwide funding gap

*Independent experts have shown that the **second downtown tunnel**...
the largest single driver of this gap... is **not needed for decades**
and **could be deferred to stabilize the entire program**.*

*Yet that tunnel is treated as **untouchable**, while a station serving a historic community of color is deemed **irresponsible**...*

That is hypercritical fiscal discipline.

4. The Second Tunnel Is the Equity Test

The second tunnel is not just a future capacity project—it is a **values choice**.

By insisting on building it now, you are choosing to:

- protect a megaproject for developer benefits,
- deepen a regional budget crisis,
- and **force inequitable tradeoffs onto the CID**.

In plain terms:

*Sound Transit can find tens of billions for flexibility...
but not hundreds of millions for a community that has already borne generations of infrastructure harm.*

*That is how **systemic racism** operates...*

through consistent, predictable decisions about who must bear the brunt of “sacrifice.”

Conclusion: Doing the Right Thing for the Region Means Doing Right by the CID

If Sound Transit is serious about equity and fiscal responsibility, the path forward is clear:

1. **Defer the second downtown tunnel** until it is actually needed.
2. **Apply fiscal discipline consistently**, not selectively.
3. **Acknowledge agency-caused delays**, instead of using them as justification for harm.

Treat CID identity and station placement with the same urgency given to branding/renaming and megaprojects.

So, I ask you directly:

Is Sound Transit a regional transit authority committed to equity and accountability—or an agency that only discovers urgency, budget limits, and discipline when it is time to say “no” to the Chinatown–International District?

The answer will define not just the CID's future...
but the credibility of this Board.

Brien Chow
Co-Founder Transit Equity for All
FOR MORE INFORMATION... linktr.ee/TransitEquityforAll_MFo4th

References

1. Sound Transit – Second Downtown Tunnel Feasibility Assessment (Dec 2025)
 - Identifies the tunnel as a major cost driver amid systemwide funding constraints.
2. The Urbanist – *Defer Seattle's Second Downtown Rail Tunnel to Save ST3* (Dec 18, 2025)
 - Documents a \$30–35B shortfall and shows deferring the tunnel could save \$4–5B+.
3. Seattle Transit Blog – Interlining and tunnel-capacity analyses (2024–2026)
 - Confirms existing tunnel capacity is sufficient for decades.
4. Sound Transit – Q4 2025 Capital Program Progress Report
 - Reports \$7.5B+ cost escalation for West Seattle Link.
5. Sound Transit Board Actions & CID Further Studies (2022–2025)
 - Show three years of Board-directed CID delays studying community-opposed alternatives.
6. Engineering News-Record (ENR) & Federal Reserve (FRED)
 - Confirm 7–10% annual construction inflation during the CID delay period.
7. The Urbanist – *Sound Transit's Station Naming Policy Has Run Amok Again* (Dec 5, 2025)
 - Contrasts rapid Symphony Station renaming with prolonged CID naming inaction.

Public Comment by Brien Chow, Sound Transit Board Meeting, Thursday, January 22, 2026, Union Station, 1:30 p.m.

Good afternoon. I'm Brien Chow, co-founder of Transit Equity for All and Chair of the Outreach Committee of the Chong Wa Benevolent Association.

What's happening here isn't about engineering.

It's about **selective logic**—which produces systemic racism.

Some invoke “no delays” to rush decisions in the Chinatown International District. But this Board **authorized three years of CID-specific delays**, during peak inflation, studying alternatives the community rejected.

That's why we have today's cost crisis.

You renamed University Street Station to *Symphony* almost instantly for tourist clarity...

While stalling for decades on correcting the ID/Chinatown Station name.

Speed for visitors...Process for communities of color.

You say an **\$800 million 4th Avenue Station** is “too expensive,” while allowing \$7.5 billion in West Seattle overruns...

and advancing a 2nd tunnel that experts say isn't needed and is driving a \$30+ billion budget hole.

So I ask:

Why is fiscal discipline only enforced when it means saying no to the CID?

The second tunnel is the equity test. Defer it and you strengthen the system for all.

If you don't, you confirm that sacrifice is only for neighborhoods like ours.

Doing right by the CID is doing right by the Region. Thank you.

Brien Chow

Co-Founder Transit Equity for All - FOR MORE INFORMATION... linktr.ee/TransitEquityforAll_MFo4th

References

Sound Transit. (2025, December). *Second downtown tunnel feasibility assessment*. Sound Transit.

Sound Transit. (2025). *Capital program progress report: Q4 2025*. Sound Transit.

Sound Transit Board of Directors. (2022–2025). *Board actions and motions related to Chinatown–International District North and South station studies*. Sound Transit public records.

Sound Transit. (2023–2026). *Technical Advisory Group (TAG) charter, recommendations, and board briefings*. Sound Transit.

The Urbanist. (2025, December 18). *Defer Seattle's second downtown rail tunnel to save ST3*.

<https://www.theurbanist.org>

The Urbanist. (2025, December 5). *Sound Transit's station naming policy has run amok again*.

<https://www.theurbanist.org>

Seattle Transit Blog. (2024–2026). *Analyses on interlining, tunnel capacity, and downtown rail operations*.

<https://seattletransitblog.com>

South Seattle Emerald. (2025, January 24). *How a new light rail station could impact the Chinatown–International District*.

<https://southseattleemerald.org>

Engineering News-Record. (2021–2024). *Construction cost index reports*. ENR.

Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. (2021–2024). *Construction price index data (FRED)*.

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org>

Puget Sound Sage. (n.d.). *Equity and displacement analyses related to infrastructure impacts in the Chinatown–International District*. Puget Sound Sage.

Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development. (n.d.). *Chinatown–International District equity and displacement reports*. City of Seattle.

These sources collectively document agency-caused project delays, historic construction inflation, selective application of fiscal discipline, major system wide cost overruns, and expert consensus that the second downtown tunnel is not required in the near term—establishing a factual basis for claims of disparate impact and systemic inequity.

Unnamed Commenter

I am amazed at how easy it is to buy and add a metro ticket to my iPhone in cities like Paris and San Francisco. I don't even have to approach a machine or download an app. It just works. It is disappointing that I have to continue to have to use a physical ORCA card in 2025 for such an amazing transit system. I would love to hear an update on when and if I will ever get to use my iPhone like I can in these other cities.

Kyle Sullivan

Dear Board Members,

I wish I could share this message with you in person, but I will be working my shift when the meeting starts.

I'm concerned about the proposed changes for the System Expansion Committee. If approved, there will no longer be anyone on the committee who represents an area served by the 4 Line. The 4 Line is further in the future than other expansion projects, but with the current budget shortfall, *all* ST3 projects need to be re-examined and improved. The 4 Line needs leadership that is invested in it specifically.

Moreover, the System Expansion Committee needs leadership that is able to dive in to the details and discuss major changes if we're going to fix this massive budget problem. We can't just make adjustments here and there around the edges. Simply put, I think Claudia Balducci is the prime example of this leadership that we need.

I don't know what is motivating this change (particularly with an extra year left on the term for committee chair), but I'm concerned that the Board isn't putting its best foot forward. The whole Puget Sound region needs a comprehensive and reliable mass transit network, and it's clear that change is needed to achieve this vision.

Thank you.

Kyle Sullivan

Electro Mechanic for Link Light Rail

& life-long Kirkland resident

Betty Lau

Written Public Comment by Betty Lau, Sound Transit Board Meeting, Thursday, January 22, 2026 at Union Station, 1:30 p.m.

I'm Betty Lau, member of the Sound Transit Citizens Accessibility Advisory Committee and co-founder of Transit Equity for All

The Accessibility Committee is still being treated in a condescending manner. That must end if transparency is to become the norm instead of an exception:

1. Decisions are dictated to us from on high, without explanation or who made it:

- “The Accessibility Committee will not have a chair or vice-chair.”
- “Meetings are closed.”
- “Meetings are every other month.”

2. Are other Sound Transit committees operated in this fashion?? Treat us the same! We are cognitively functioning adults!

3. This board seems poised to choose a 60-day comment period instead of the 90 that communities have been asking for for the past 3 years of delay. And since there has been zero outreach to the Accessibility committee and zero outreach to language communities about what Accessibility looks like, here are two recommendations:

a) *make meaningful comparison charts*, which we have been requesting since 2023 (ST Workshop #4, Jan. 5, 2023). The ones published in 2022 are incomplete or do not compare what we asked for. Comparison charts should compare apples to apples and oranges to oranges, so to speak. And be translated and distributed Region-wide in the top six languages.

b) *end information silos*: I recently received an email about walking distances between South (rebranded Dearborn Station) of CID station and 4th Avenue. Strangely, it was not sent to the entire Accessibility committee. Stranger still, I wasn't the one who asked the question! I did the follow up to help the person who asked it.

— The walking times listed for South of CID station were only 1 to 3 minutes more than for 4th Avenue Station. This is wildly inaccurate because South of CID/Dearborn station platform is not at Dearborn. It's at 6th and Royal Brougham. That's .4 miles or an 8 minute walk, according to Google maps. That's only on the surface and does not include time going down elevators, escalators and finding one's way to the right platform.

—North of CID/rebranded Midtown Station was not included. This preferred alternative is critical for the Japantown and Little Saigon parts of CID to access light rail. Why would walking distances to it be deliberately kept from us? Why the secrecy? What's there to hide?

—Times and distances to ferries, buses, streetcar, Amtrak, and Sounder—also omitted but needed for us to judge what is best for ridership among the options.

Collaborate with us to provide the proper comparisons and accurate information we need!

c) Make a meaningful list of pro's and cons for each alternative. (N&S of CID, whatever is still being considered). The ones provided for understanding the 2022 DEIS were incomplete or selective.

And finally, it would be terrific to see a report to the board and hear the board discussion on the following negatives of N&S of CID because we've heard plenty about why community choices are rejected:

Quotes from Sound Transit consulting firm VMS (Nov. 14, 2023): **"The South of CID alternative does not provide good connectivity between the light rail lines, to the heavy rail corridor, or to a major employment center. It is unclear what the advantage of this location is from a utility standpoint."**

About North of CID/New Midtown James St.: "Reducing the connectivity between modes to save schedule for a project of this magnitude and duration **would need to be carefully considered.**"

- "Replaces" Midtown Station – **needs to serve same area, including connection to Madison Rapid Ride G-Line"**
- "This alternative (N of CID/rebranded Midtown James St.) does place the station in a very constrained space for construction as well. **Making construction difficult and risky given the surrounding structures.**"

From HNTB memo to Sound Transit on South of CID/rebranded Dearborn St., 1/24/23: **increased out of direction walk and ride times; 12 minute walks to other transit modes and multi modal destinations; longer, extra transfers for those traveling from the south and east side.**

From reading Sound Transit reports prepared by independent consultants HNTB and VMS, we know the negative impacts of a 2nd tunnel will disproportionately impact communities of color, those with temporary or permanent disabilities, the neurodiverse, and seniors.

Please do what you say, that you will listen to communities, increase transparency and follow the Six Guiding Principles for light rail decisions.

Thank you.

Comments received after the meeting's comment deadline

Marilyn Kennell

I am Marilyn Kennell from West Seattle. I am a member of three transit coalitions that have studied regional transit and mobility issues for more than 10 years.

To inform ourselves, we held two community walks of the “proposed” WS light rail route (2023 and 2024), and held a transit forum in 2025. Board members were invited to all these events - no one showed up.

Our experts also wrote a comprehensive 18-page Environmental Impact Statement (2024) in response to Sound Transit's WSLE DEIS and EIS documents. (2500 pages). We delivered our EIS-C to the Board chair and members September 2024. We will send new members electronic copies.

I have made multiple formal requests over the past 5 years, on behalf of the West Seattle Community, asking for a genuine discussion about the significant impacts of bringing light rail to West Seattle. All requests were ignored.

Now that Sound Transit has acknowledged a \$35 billion budget gap, you will be having another retreat to “rethink” affordability issues, as well as problems with transparency, inclusion, and public trust. We should like to be part of that discussion and ask for eight minutes to present our findings and solutions. We are all transit riders, btw, and hope all members of this board are too.

Marilyn Kennell and colleagues

rethinkthelink.org

smartertransit.org

Amplify Avalon