

10/22/2026 Board of Directors Meeting

Written Public Comment Submissions

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Martin Westerman (2 separate comments)

Greetings Board Members et al.,

Now that you've gifted more money than two million Washington workers earn in a year to a man who doesn't need it — your CEO whose makes more than \$474,000 — how else will you waste taxpayer money at this meeting?

The Resolution R2026-23 before you is about property acquisition in West Seattle. What are your alternatives to wasting money on property acquisitions?

Several less expensive, less destructive, lower carbon transit options that can be deployed years earlier than light rail. We have presented them all to you in testimonies here, and in meetings with individual board members, in research and studies. You are also aware of the Australia study, which found that the majority of people prefer light rail because it looks better to them than buses and BRT — not because it performs better. Because it looks better. And many of those 3400 people surveyed did not even ride public transit. Do you want to waste money on what looks better, rather than on what performs better?

Your DEIS and FEIS studies say say the West Seattle light rail line will cause irreparable environmental damage, cost more than any light rail project on Earth, carry no more passengers than buses do, not reduce traffic congestion, and create a carbon footprint that Sound Transit will never mitigate. Have you read your DEIS and FEIS?

If that were not enough to torpedo the West Seattle and Ballard light rail projects, there's more. West Seattle does not satisfy criteria used worldwide to judge the merits of transit projects.

Do you really want to authorize property acquisition for this project anyway? Maybe you should pause and reconsider all the other options we have suggested. To us, that is what any wise board would do. Sound Transit held a West Seattle session two weeks to discuss property acquisition with neighborhoods. All the local people came away dissatisfied with your representatives. Please also recall your own Citizens Advisory Group telling you in 2022 that Sound Transit offered West Seattle no good options. That assessment has not changed.

If you approve Resolution R2026-23, you will basically authorizes your agency to waste more taxpayer money on a project that is the worst public transit choice you can make. Please do not make this the answer my question about how you'll waste more taxpayer money at this meeting.

Please instead show us all that you board members are good stewards of public money, and make wise transit choices.

Greetings Board Members,

Sound Transit is not "environmentally friendly" because it has a sustainability department and runs light rail on carbon-free electricity. It may claim it is environmentally friendly because it is an administrative agency, and all the greenhouse gas and pollution generating dirty work is done by people it hires. But that doesn't look like a defensible position.

Its light rail construction generates about 400,000 tons of carbon a year. It has cut more than 140 acres of carbon-absorbing trees, and killed thousands of Lake Washington fish, including federally protected Chinook salmon. Its proposals for the Ballard and West Seattle light rail extensions will generate up to two million more tons of carbon, cut another six acres of urban forest, and severely disturb natural habitats.

Ballard and West Seattle light rail will not reduce traffic congestion, or carry any more passengers than buses do. But they will do "irreparable" environmental damage. KUOW reported last year that you apparently colluded with the City of Seattle to hide that from the Federal Transit Administration. And earlier this year, you tried to hide the fish kill from the public.

So what other environmental damage are you hiding? Your geotechnical and site preparation work is already encroaching on the Pigeon Point Great Blue Heron habitat. West Seattle light rail construction staging will cause even greater impacts to Seattle's largest remaining contiguous forest, and its largest greenbelt.

So that has moved us to formally request that City departments provide clear answers and immediate actions on specific required permits for multi-layered retaining walls and heavy excavation on the steep slopes of Pigeon Point. Specifically, Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections (SDCI) Master Use Permits (MUPs), Environmentally Critical Area (ECA) exemptions, and SDOT Street Use Permits required for construction staging inside the West Duwamish Greenbelt.

We also want to know if Clearing Permits have been Issued to authorize tree removal, canopy clearing, or heavy grading within the heron colony's active buffer zone, and if they been granted or reviewed under the city's updated Light Rail Land Use Code (Ordinance 127228), and when.

Next, we want to know what independent monitoring systems—completely free of Sound Transit's internal staff—are being deployed by the city to inspect the Pigeon Point site weekly?

Next, with our CID colleagues Mr. Chow and Ms. Lau, we formally request a reply from you detailing actions the City and Sound Transit will take now regarding the CID, to update its analysis, using the City's Racial Equity Toolkit, and the Chinatown-International District Toolkit for additional analysis and public engagement.

Finally, we formally request a public statement on what steps Sound Transit is taking to comply with the Washington Climate Commitment Act (CCA). If it is not taking these steps, please explain why.

You can chose lower carbon, more environmentally friendly, cheaper, faster build options than light rail for Ballard and West Seattle. This would be a good time for you to consider them.

Looking forward to your prompt replies,

Martin Westerman & transit expert colleagues

Jon Gerhardt

From : Jon Gerhardt, West Seattle Business Owner

To : The Sound Transit Board / October 22nd

The Full Fee provisions contained within Resolution No. R2026-23 is a new twist to a municipal project that is overbudget and behind schedule.

The Sound Transit program bringing light rail to West Seattle has been chipping away for 8 years. I am supportive of this project. As a long-term resident of West Seattle, I have been following progress and checking planned routes to stay informed. As a business owner and employer, it is my job to be awake, aware, and ready for future disruptions. Seattle needs this type of transit infrastructure. Starting with a first public meetings at the Masonic Hall in 2016, for West Seattle businesses and residents, **this is the defining infrastructure project for our age.**

For the last 7 years, I have built a successful practice working from the Jefferson Square commercial space. Following the Sound Transit Plan, once it was declared that Jefferson Square would be the final terminus, we made proactive plans to re-locate. This involved 18 months of planning, negotiations, tenant improvements, and a final relocation. All of this was underwritten by my solo practice - no handouts; no public service consultants; no public dollars accepted. There was no need to extend our stay and hope to be compensated for our forced relocation, then scramble for limited business space on Sound Transit's schedule. In West Seattle, Class A space is scarce. We read the notices, we stayed informed...so we got proactive based on the information provided. Despite multiple delays with the Sound Transit project, our business mapped out a 10-year plan and took action to stay out of your way.

Now we are in the West Seattle Corporate Center. As I reviewed my notes over the years, nowhere was there a mention that the West Seattle Corporate Center was to be absorbed. As quoted October 8th, by Executive Director - Well Lawson, this location is "vital to supply additional laydown and truck staging space". When did this become a make-or-break resource? Why purchase? Why not lease ample parking space, stage, and scale overflow operations as

needed? The last thing Sound Transit needs to do is spend more \$ on temporary-use property, just to sell it back to friendly developers after the project is complete. Purchasing real property takes time, is expensive, and commercially disruptive. As you all know, the cost just keeps going up and time is of the essence.

The Sound Transit plan will define the Seattle commercial landscape for the next 50 years or more. The West Seattle link is an investment in the future; that is the whole point of this project. So where was the advanced notice that parcel WS-2468 was in play? Businesses, like mine, pay attention. As this project remakes the face of West Seattle, we have to. With Resolution No. 2026-23, even more commercial space may be taken away. Despite the *enhanced outreach strategies* and *nearly 300 individual meetings with property owners* - the planned Full Fee plan for the West Seattle Corporate Center is not only a surprise; **it is a bold move**. It is noted.

With the planned repurposing of Jefferson Square, the Class A business space in West Seattle is in limited supply. In a city where downtown small business vacancy rates are now > 30%, keeping business and jobs local has more relevance than ever. Eying the West Seattle Corporate Center does not help.

In your own virtual flyover video, as linked in The Urbanist October 10th write-up, the West Seattle Corporate Center stands. It is represented prominently just south of the Delridge Station on SW Andover St. as the rail cars move smoothly along. It is a vision that will put Seattle in the same league of Tier 1 cities around the world. With good planning and logistical excellence, I am sure that the West Seattle Corporate Center will continue to be a prominent fixture along the West Seattle route for many years to come.

Before any final decision is made, please make all efforts to explain and justify this surprise Full Fee plan within Resolution No. R2026-23.

For the public record,

///JG

Travis Henderson

Dear Chair Somers, Board Members, Mayor Wilson, Councilmembers, and the Ballard Link team,

Following up on my April proposal: a substantially revised version is now published as an op-ed in The Urbanist, endorsed by seven advocacy organizations across the region: Downtown Seattle Streets for All, Eastside Urbanism, Move Redmond, Save Ballard Rail, Seattle Subway, Transit Equity for All, and West Seattle Urbanism.

[Op-Ed: The \\$10 Billion Question Sound Transit Has Never Asked](#)

Since April, the proposal has gone through five months of further research and several rounds of editorial review. The cost analysis has been rebuilt: the tunnel estimate now draws directly on Sound Transit's December 2025 feasibility assessment, and the elevated estimate applies the highest per-mile rate among comparable projects, a more conservative basis than my April submission. Even so, the potential savings grew to roughly \$10 billion, exceeding Ballard Link's entire funding gap.

The op-ed also responds to the schedule concerns raised in your April reply, and explains why the recently issued RFI cannot substitute for a formal study.

I respectfully urge the Board to commission a formal engineering study and cost comparison of an elevated alternative through downtown Seattle. I also plan to submit formal comments when the Draft EIS is published.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Travis Henderson

Commenter Name

Dear Members of the Sound Transit Board,

I'm a downtown Seattle resident and a strong supporter of ST3. I've followed the Ballard Link situation closely since the May 28 realignment. This week's op-ed in The Urbanist, "The \$10 Billion Question Sound Transit Has Never Asked," is the first time I've seen anyone seriously ask whether an elevated route through downtown could close Ballard's funding gap.

Elevated guideway costs a fraction of deep-bore tunnel, so an elevated route through downtown would save billions. The open question is whether it saves enough to close the funding gap entirely, and it's kind of shocking we never formally studied an elevated option. The alternatives considered last year were all focused on tunnels, and the current request for cost-saving ideas seems to exclude anything that changes the project definition. With a funding gap in the billions and a Ballard opening that could slip to 2060, that's a question worth answering before the region accepts the delay.

I'm asking the Board to direct staff to commission an independent study comparing an elevated downtown route with the tunnel, and to make clear that a change of that scale is on the table.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance in Elevating ST3 to Save It.

Chris Cowart

Amir Kazi

Hello,

Today, October 6th 2026 at 8:50 am, the permit parking area was completely full at the Lynnwood Light Rail Center. I saw multiple people who had parked individually were leaving their cars parked in the permit area. I have previously complained about this issue, and have pointed out that unless this is curbed, no one will follow the rules, leading to a complete collapse of the permit parking area mechanism, which is what we saw today.

To the credit of Sound Transit, I saw CL from parking enforcement checking and placing warning tickets. She also helped remove an individual illegally parked in the permit area, upon my request since I could not find a spot. I really appreciate the work CL is doing, and I told her I am certain over half the cars parked there did not have a permit, to which she responded that she had been going around ticketing a large number of the cars there.

Please continue enforcement and not treat this as a one-off occurrence, otherwise this issue will continue to happen. I'd also suggest considering towing cars who are found in violation of the permit area rules.

I really appreciate this permit parking initiative, and I hope it continues to thrive.

Amir Kazi

Form Letters

Note: The following is a form letter submitted by 16 individuals.

Sound Transit Board,

I attended the forum on October 19 at the National Nordic Museum. It was great to see that Sound Transit and leadership at the city, county, and state level are taking the Ballard Light Extension problem seriously. We are waiting for further steps from Sound Transit to close the funding gap to build light rail to Ballard, and we are ready to take action to make it happen. I look forward to hearing you provide meaningful updates on what measures you will take to deliver light rail to the neighborhood as promised to voters in 2016.

Thank you,

Dragana Miljkovic

Dear Board members,

I'm writing about R2026-23 and the taking of my home at 2054 SW Charlestown St. My family is devastated. We are the only family in our complex being displaced. We are just a few feet further out on the hill from our neighbors and our home is the only one being taken while our neighbors' homes are saved. This makes no sense to us at all.

My son and daughter, and my mother and myself will be displaced, along with our dog and three indoor-outdoor cats. My mother is 86 and lives with us. She can no longer walk distances or take stairs, and our garden and her tomatoes are her life now.

Our home sits on the very tip of the Pigeon Point ridge, abutting the West Duwamish greenbelt on two sides, with wide open unobstructed views of the Space Needle and city skyline and Elliott Bay from every window. It is our slice of heaven, with incredible privacy and safety, tucked at the far end of our cul-de-sac. And my drive to work is 13 minutes, which means I am close enough to go home for any emergency - this is so vital to my family as a single-mom household.

For months now I have been looking at sale listings for anything like it, and there just isn't another home like this one.

Our relocation agent told us Sound Transit has to be good stewards of taxpayers' money. I heard that to mean they will not go to the moon to find us an equivalent home.

I want you to know the cost of this project to my family is immeasurable.

Thank you for thinking about us as you consider this vote,

Dragana Miljkovic

Marilynn Kennell

Dear Board and Council Members,

You have both the ability and responsibility to prevent the imminent destruction of the West Duwamish Greenbelt. Pigeon Point is a critical wildlife habitat and forms part of Seattle's largest contiguous forest. This vital ecosystem supports many species, including one of the largest Great Blue Heron nesting sites in the Puget Sound region.

Early geotechnical drilling, utility surveying, and preliminary clearing along the lower edge of the slope (along the bike path to the Low Bridge) **have already chipped away at the canopy fringe**. For sensitive species like the heron, noise and canopy thinning in the buffer zone can cause nesting failure **long before** train tracks are even constructed. Our local wildlife is already at a breaking point. The landmark 2026 Birds Connect Seattle report revealed a catastrophic 21% drop in local bird counts and an 18% decline in species diversity across our city's parks, with severe urban habitat loss cited as the primary driver. Your response to this collapsing avian ecosystem is crucial.

Allowing Sound Transit to clear mature canopy in this critical area directly contradicts your CEO's previous commitment to combat climate change, which he called the greatest threat to all beings in King County. Residents of Delridge, West Seattle, already suffer from a severe urban heat island effect. The social inequity of cutting trees from this neighborhood's centuries-old forest cannot be justified. Planting young saplings elsewhere decades from now will not address the immediate, irreversible ecological collapse and public health impacts facing Delridge.

Sound Transit can serve communities without destroying more of our shared urban canopy, but the WSLE light rail—which will only take us to SODO until a second tunnel is built—will do permanent, irreparable damage to many ecological sanctuaries. Our children will be environmentally impoverished if you allow WSLE to proceed without oversight, and will also suffer economically if you support 75-year bonds to fund this project.*

- The WSLE light rail is projected to cost over \$5 billion for a short line that only reaches SODO. A second tunnel is expected to add another \$2 billion, making it the most expensive urban rail project in the country. Additionally, the unique Duwamish Crossing bridge will likely increase costs further, based on Sound Transit's project history.

Jan Roberts

Transit Desert Relief - Serve the underserved transit-dependent bus riders. Abort the West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) and replace it with an enhanced Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

Jan Roberts

Betty Lau

This comment was submitted as an attachment, which will be included at the end of this document.

Brien Chow

Written Public Comment by Brien Chow, Sound Transit Board Meeting 10_22_26, Union Station, 1:30 p.m.

Good afternoon, Board Members,

I am Brien Chow, co-founder of Transit Equity for All and Chair of the Outreach Committee for the Chong Wa Benevolent Association of Washington.

Four years ago, the City of Seattle turned in a detailed account of its comments on the 2022 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, 1500 of them, I'm told.

The City found the Environmental Justice analysis deficient:

"The City finds that the DEIS and the EJ Analysis is missing critical analysis and mitigation proposals to support the conclusion that with offsetting benefits the project would not result in disproportionately high and adverse effects on environmental justice populations."

That was April 2022. The analysis remains unrepaired and the mitigations remain missing.

The City and Sound Transit were supposed to build this analysis together using the City's Racial Equity Toolkit. The Toolkit named the Chinatown-International District for additional analysis and public engagement.

The economics chapter never analyzes the scale of harm from displacements and closures, never asks whether the displaced businesses are small businesses or cultural anchors. The population of 1300+ non-English speaking elderly are never mentioned. Most have health and mobility challenges.

Your staff assume businesses will relocate “successfully” — without considering localized customer bases, finding of comparable commercial space, or whether federal funding can even support the move;

the City flags this as *“particularly important in the CID.”*

They never studied CID business impacts from street closures, parking loss, or adjacent construction impacts to residents or businesses nor addressed historic harm or cumulative impacts on neighborhood cohesion, social or cultural institutions and health care facilities.

The City’s findings:

“The DEIS does not sufficiently examine the full range of impacts to businesses and residents, including loss of community cultural identity and cohesion.”

On mitigation, the City is blunt:

“The City believes that the level of mitigation in the DEIS is not acceptable for a project of this magnitude.”

The Environmental Justice appendix does not describe mitigation strategies — it references them in a table. *The City called that unacceptable:*

“The DEIS does not consider the relationship of displaced businesses to the community, particularly those that serve as cultural anchors in the CID. Their displacement would have ripple effects and impact on the vitality of both the local CID community, but also the broader region for which the CID is a cultural hub with a regional draw. The DEIS does not propose sufficient mitigation of these location-sensitive businesses.”

The rest of the City’s comments are just as dismal. Staff inadequately evaluated impacts on minority-owned businesses — the demographics of the owners and workers that would be displaced are “unknown.”

According to NEPA, the full effects of socio-economic studies on underserved, minority populations must be conducted.

The 2022 DEIS drew 5,100 public comments. ***The overwhelming majority chose 4th Avenue; exactly one commenter chose 5th Avenue.*** Sound Transit response: advance the “North and South of CID” alignment that bookends the neighborhood with a bypass that disconnects the Region.

In August you approved a \$122 million engineering contract to fund only the preferred bypass alternatives — starving the community’s choice that staff offered to us

I ask the Board to direct the CEO and staff to:

1. Complete the Environmental Justice and Racial Equity Toolkit analyses the City recommended — including CID studies of cultural anchors, road-closure impacts, and cumulative harm — before the Final EIS.

2. Produce the mitigation plan the City called “unacceptable”: real mitigation for with explicit protections for CID cultural anchors and minority-owned businesses.

Fund preliminary engineering for the 4th Avenue alternative.

3. Restore the CID hub station the voters approved in 2016 and correct the backwards International District/Chinatown station name now. It’s confusing for the neurodivergent and sight impaired.

Thank you.

Brien Chow, Co-Founder - Transit Equity for All

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transitequity4all@gmail.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION... linktr.ee/TransitEquityforAll [MFo4th](#)

Sources

1. City of Seattle, Comments on the West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions (WSBLE) Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement,

2. Attachments B–M (Apr. 28, 2022), Attachment B: Racial Equity Toolkit and Environmental Justice — EJ/RET findings and missing analyses.

3. Attachment J: Mitigation — “level of mitigation... not acceptable”; CID cultural anchors unmitigated.
4. 2022 WSBLE Draft EIS public comment record (5,100 comments), reviewed in full by Betty Lau, co-founder, Transit Equity for All.
5. The Urbanist (May 2026): \$122M HNTB contract funds engineering for preferred alternatives only.
6. The Urbanist (2026): Board added “North and South of CID” alignment; hub moved to Pioneer Square.
7. PubliCola (Mar. 24, 2023): Board adopted bypass as preferred option; chair’s “false hope” remark.
8. Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d.
9. Sound Transit 3 ballot measure (Nov. 2016): voter-approved CID station.

Louella Tan

Dear Sound Transit Service Planning Team and Board of Directors,

First, I want to express my appreciation for the Sounder commuter rail service. I genuinely love riding the train and appreciate the work that Sound Transit does to provide reliable transportation for our communities. I think the service is valuable, and I am grateful to have this option available. My intention in writing is not to criticize the work being done, but to share a few concerns and suggestions that I believe could make an already valuable service accessible to even more people.

Specifically, I would like to request consideration of the following improvements:

1. **An additional southbound evening train around 8:00 p.m.** The current schedule leaves a significant gap for people who work evening shifts. Many essential jobs, particularly in hospitals and healthcare facilities, operate around-the-clock, with shifts commonly beginning or ending around 7:00 p.m. Employees finishing these shifts are unable to use the Sounder to get home because the last southbound train departs Seattle at approximately 6:30 p.m. This limitation forces riders to find alternative transportation, incur additional expenses, or rely on driving when they would otherwise prefer public transit.
2. **Limited but consistent weekend service.** The designation of the Sounder as a commuter rail service should not exclude people who work on weekends. Healthcare workers, hospitality employees, retail workers, students, and others still need reliable transportation on Saturdays and Sundays. Even a limited weekend schedule, with a few strategically timed departures, would make the system more accessible and useful to a broader segment of the population.

I understand that expanding rail service requires coordination, funding, staffing, and consideration of operational constraints. However, I believe it is important to evaluate whether the current schedule adequately reflects the actual needs of the communities Sound Transit serves. Public transportation should support people with a variety of work schedules, not only those who work traditional weekday hours.

I respectfully ask Sound Transit to evaluate ridership demand for later evening departures and weekend operations. I would also appreciate information about the factors that currently limit these service hours and whether these improvements could be considered in future service planning.

Thank you again for the work you do and for providing a service that I genuinely enjoy using. I am sharing this feedback because I value the Sounder and would love to see it become even more accessible to the communities it serves. I hope these suggestions can help contribute to that goal.

Sincerely,

Louella Tan

Derek Dexheimer

How can this be controversial and constantly delayed? This should've been in place 40 years ago. Ballard is to the rest of the city as Brooklyn is to Manhattan: two key centers that should be trivial to travel between, but instead are filled with delays and backups.

If I want to go to from Church Ave in Brooklyn to Grand Central, I take one train and I'm there in less than 30 minutes. Seattle pushes people into cars because of the multiple bus transfers, and the buses getting stuck in traffic.

A Ballard link would surely be one of the highest riderships in the system. It would get people out of cars. It would accelerate Seattle becoming a real city instead of the dumpy backwater it clings to.

Stop wasting time and killing this with Seattle Process and build the subway to Ballard yesterday.

Derek Dexheimer

Devon Breithart

Hi ST Boards,

Thanks for making the trek to the island of Ballard this week. I was disappointed to see that it appears that the South Lake Union station is quietly being cut. As a Ballard resident who uses transit to get to Fred Hutch, this station is essential for me and other cancer patients.

Thanks,

Devon Breithart, MS, OTR/L