

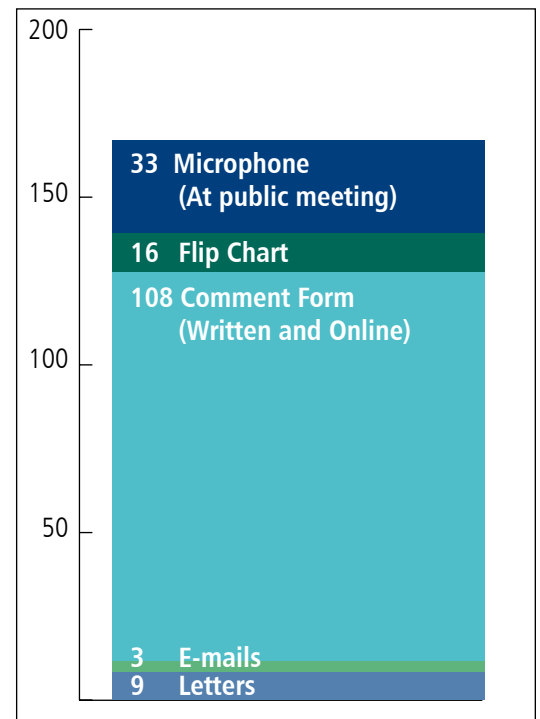
Mercer Island Listening Tour Follow-up

In collaboration with the City of Mercer Island, King County Metro and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Sound Transit recently completed the Mercer Island listening Tour. The tour follows Sound Transit Board of Directors Motion (No. M2015-67) directing staff to work with the City of Mercer Island, the Mercer Island public and other interested parties to identify issues regarding implementation of and access to East Link light rail.

The following activities were completed, along with attendance numbers:

<p>Public Meeting Thursday, Sept. 24 Mercer Island Community Center 215+ people attended; 33 people gave public comment</p>	<p>Drop-In Session Thursday, Oct. 1 Tully's 20 people attended</p>
<p>Drop-In Session Wednesday, Sept. 30 Jewish Community Center 3 people attended</p>	<p>Drop-In Session Monday, Oct. 5 Starbucks 26 people attended</p>

Comments received



The following chart shows the ranking scores from the comment form when asked to rank the transportation issues in the order of their importance.

Please rank the issues in order of importance to you	Score	Overall rank
Access to I-90	496	1
On-island traffic circulation/traffic mitigation	428	2
Parking	390	3
Integrated transit service	332	4
Light rail construction	283	5
Light rail station design	244	6
Other	221	7

Total Respondents 95

Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks, the score is the sum of all weighted rank counts.

Public comments were organized into the following categories, and below is a sample of the comments received for each of those categories.

Access to I-90

"Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving. Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route. Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island on and off the Island."

"Traffic on and off of Mercer Island is presently good, but it is getting progressively worse. Infrastructure is not keeping up with the population. The future looks even worse. Losing the middle lane of I-90 to light rail is a colossal mistake."

"I am very distressed to find out that, you are taking away the direct access to HOV lanes for Mercer Island based carpools who want to travel to Seattle. Not only are you reducing my access, and making me fight through regular traffic lanes to get to the HOV lane, but you are also requiring emergency first responders to do the same thing."

On-Island Traffic Circulation

"On-island traffic circulation" is very important for Mercer Island. We want to be a standalone town, where we can easily move around our downtown in cars or as pedestrians without fighting traffic not related to our downtown."

Cut through traffic using North Mercer Way as express lanes. Drivers try to bypass gridlock on I-90 (especially during Mariner game nights) and speed down N. Mercer Way. They ignore bike riders walkers to a point of making it dangerous to be on N Mercer Way between Covenant Shores and Island Crest. It would be impossible to get out of our driveway if there were not signal @ E. Mercer off ramp and E mercer on-ram"

"Keep Island Crest Way and N. Mercer Way free flowing from 3pm to 7pm."

Parking/Access to Light Rail

"I need available parking at the Park and Ride as a MI resident."

"Parking for Mercer Islanders only!"

"Can't use the park-and-ride as it's full by 7:30. How are we supposed to use transitw? Need Mercer Islander only parking. Mercer Islander only permits would be great."

Integrated Transit Service (Bus/Light Rail)

"I also am strongly opposed to the bus turn-around concept currently being proposed; as if I understand it correctly the plan is to send buses multiple times per hour to Mercer Island and have them turn-around there, which will create significant traffic, noise and pollution."

"No Bus Intercept on M.I. Given the daily, horrendous traffic congestion M.I. experiences through I-90 and on M.I.(N.End), this will become a traffic nightmare!"

"No bus turn around, don't increase traffic and pollution on 90."

Light Rail Construction

"Your construction schedule is too long."

"I live close to the light rail station and am concerned about construction impacts and mitigation. My primary concerns are ensuring that transit service for Mercer Island is enhanced during construction, that station-area construction activities are structured to minimize impact and avoid long detours, and Sound Transit and its contractor(s) are responsive to concerns."

Why is Sound Transit proceeding with Light Rail construction across I-90 when the critical underlying technology (rail based train service across a floating bridge) does not exist?"

Light Rail Station Design

"There is no need to build a palatial station. Please save time and mass by building as small a station as possible. Finally, please work to give walkers and bikers a safe, easy path to enter/exit the station or catch busses."

"The station design is very unattractive and totally out of character with Mercer Island. B.V. Park and Ride station seems to blend in. Ours looks like a waste treatment plant especially with the big orange things on top-ours seems outside, way too big!-above ground."

"Keep minimal light rail design."

Other

"We are vehemently opposed to light rail crossing the floating bridge from Mercer Island to Seattle. The bridge is a vital part of transportation between the Eastside, MI and Seattle. Risking untried techniques which may fail or may damage the bridge or shorten its life is a bad idea."

"Very inflexible solutions. Centuries old technology - should be smarter!"

"Self-driving cars are coming, you're building the wrong thing. Need to go back to the drawing board."

Next Steps:

Based on the feedback received during the listening tour, public comments were reviewed and organized into the following categories. In the coming weeks, each issue will be assigned a responsible agency or agencies with next steps and a timeline for those next steps to occur. Stay informed by subscribing to [soundtransit.org/Subscribe-to-alerts](https://www.soundtransit.org/Subscribe-to-alerts).

Comment form transcription - written and online

Please share your thoughts about transportation on and off Mercer Island. If you selected 'other' in question 3 (ranking transportation in order of importance to you), please tell us more.

- *I am particularly concerned about the potentially destructive effects of handling any increase in the number of buses in the Town Center. It can be destructive of:*
 - *Health of residents who have to cope with increased exhaust*
 - *Safety of pedestrians and vehicles and bicyclists*
 - *Commercial interests of businesses in Town Center. Increased bus traffic is NOT guaranteed to increase business revenues.*
- *I'd like the MI P&R to be limited to MI residents. I'm not in favor of a larger P&R because it'll just be used by more off island residents.*
- *Transit service on the island should connect more of us to the station and the town center, so less car parking is needed. Big deal: Enough parking somewhere to mitigate South Bellevue closure! Another big deal: I'm in the minority among islanders, but I love the bus intercept, so I can get to lots of eastside destinations on a bus with one less transfer. I think the bus intercept is a win for the town center, especially if buses don't use 27th St. Thanks for the opportunity!*
- *Bicycles need to be encouraged on I-90, including busses. Bus route 204 needs to be extended to South Mercer QFC. Better signage at bike routes across north MI and on EWML route.*
- *Driver try to bypass gridlock on I-90 west (especially Mariner game nights) and speed down no. Mercer Way. They ignore bike riders, walkers to a point of making it dangerous to be on North Mercer between Covenant Shores and Island Crest. It would be impossible to get out of our drive if there were not signals @ E. Mercer off ramp and E. Mercer on-ramp.*
- *Bus intercept and bus turnaround should be placed in Issaquah where there is land to handle it! M.I. cannot handle hundreds of buses the Island traffic is already horrific! Use the Eastgate Bus Terminal to handle bus turnaround and parking.*
- *I think transit should be on the same level as I-90 traffic! Below M.I. streets. Anything other than pick up and drop off should be off Island. Factoria is a good location or underground.*
- *The station design is very unattractive ?ugly? and totally out of character with Mercer Island. B.V. Park & Ride station seems to blend in. Ours looks like a waste treatment plant – espec. With the big orange things on top – ours seems oversized, way too big! Above the ground. Please don't bring all those busses here. Take them to BV. We want direct on & off access – not winding thru our poor little downtown.*
- *As one stuck on island, we need a decent way on and off – we have no alternative. No bus turnaround – don't increase traffic and pollution on 90.*
- *I see no credible reason to cut off westbound access to the HOV lanes on 77th St. This eliminates practical access to those lanes from the town center and north Mercer Island.*
- *No bus intercept! Parking for Mercer Islanders only! Keep light rail station design minimal. Access to I-90 is critical. I-90 construction – give us a break.*
- *Cross MI I-90 Bike/Ped pathway is inadequate and poorly routed. Both bridges are too narrow for safe passage.*
- *Light rail riders should transfer from/to busses close to their points of origination.*

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- *Mercer Island should have a light rail station with parking for Mercer Island. Bellevue/Issaquah should park in their communities. Kent & Renton coming N on 405 will need pkg too. Safety of I-90 with reduced lanes and shoulders is major concern. Lots of trucks. Congestion on Mercer Island a big concern especially to get on and off I90.*
- *1. DO IT RIGHT even if it costs a lot more. Think about what our great-grandchildren will be using 100 years from now. 2. Build a transit center at the MI Station. Start with a lid over the freeway between 77th and 80th Aves. Train station below, bus turnaround on the lid, parking garage above the bus center. Include a pedestrian overpass to the city center at 78th. 3. ALL government entities must cooperate: MI city, Metro, Sound Transit, WSDOT, federal government.*
- *We need to access our home easily.*
- *Maps need to be more clear with street names or numbers i.e. "East Link Light Rail Alignment"*
- *I need available parking at the Park & Ride as a MI resident. I need access on and off the Island in a timely manner to make Dr. appts etc. I need access to our own community without a regional bus turnaround congestion our local streets.*
- *You MUST leave access from Bellevue Way to M.I. open during the weekend closures – why? – Safety 911 issues that come from Bellevue. There is No construction on the designated lane to E. Mercer/Bellevue so it should be no big deal. It is the least that can be done for the horrible inconvenience M.Islanders will put up with for years.*
- *Public space is for public use, please resist any calls to restrict parking to Island residents. Just as I-90 is for all to use, so is Link!*
- *Light rail makes absolutely no sense. 1. It is ridiculously expensive – at \$200 million/mile, you could buy about 1000 buses for what it would cost to build across MI. 2. It will never achieve a number of passengers that will allow it to break even. Even the most promoted and advertised systems only transport about 5% of travelers. 3. It will result in cutbacks to all other transit services, including buses. This will result in real hardships for poor people. 4. You do not know how to put a train over a floating bridge. Never been done.*
- *Traffic on the north end is at max. of capacity. The idea of a bus intercept and rail station is incomprehensible. There is no room for these additions and there is no parking available currently and will be worse when this construction and at completion of projects. More buses are a better option than light rail. Losing center lane is a terrible idea. Has the rail over the bridge been engineered? This entire project will make the north end unlivable.*
- *I heartily support all of the concerns and goals articulated by Vision MI – as expressed by the first speaker (Ben) at tonight's session (9/24/15). I also support the comments of Jim Stanton at tonight's meeting (9/24/15).*
- *Closing the So. Bellevue P&R – huge mistake. Worked on I-90 design/EIS as MI staff – firm approved SEPA analysis of So Belv transit route alts – closing So Belv P&R huge impact on MI, Sound Transit needs to 1. Finance more structure parking on MI 2. Limit some/most parking to MI residents/employees of MI businesses/City/School district.*
- *It can be very noise along I-90, especially when there is construction. It's amplified when wet (much of the year) and when leaves are down (fall/winter). MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE W/ Sound BARRIER! Tests need to happen all-year, including winter and during construction. Solutions: Extend sound walls to the very ends of the Island. Raise Walls. Use materials on walls and the road that absorb noise (the newly invented materials). Plant more trees (act as sound absorbers*

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– evergreens better since don't lose leaves). *BAN COMPRESSION BREAKS across M.I. Start all this sooner than later so we don't have to hear construction for the next 10 or so years.*

- *\$20B spent is wasted if you remove transport capacity that we are currently using. This is our livelihoods. Access to hospitals and food that you are threatening. Why not build a new Rail Bridge? Closing the express lanes will hurt us.*
- *It seems bad design to collect buses from Issaquah (or any other eastside location) at a Mercer Island Light Rail Station. It seems to make sense to collect those people on the Eastside @ Bellevue Station(s). Even if it means making the Bellevue avenue station 8x more robust than the planned 2, 3 or 4 times. I doubt this more robust expansion would be waste in future years. The lost fuel, productivity and the extra emissions that a clogged east channel bridge seem to outweigh the costs of building a very robust (even over built) Bellevue station.*
- *I am thrilled to have light rail transit. I will definitely use it.*
- *Maintain easy access HOV lanes keeping Island Crest Way free flowing and N. Mercer Way, 3 -7 pm*
- *Very concerned about impact to family life and raising children with less access to I-90. It is already hard to get carpools on/off island.*
- *Do not trust ST. Kite Hill was the tipping point. Does not like how ideas are floated. No clean message about construction impacts of project. Would like island only parking.*
- *Please provide equivalent access as South Bellevue – Parking for Kiss & Ride, paratransit.*
- *Clear drop-off point for MI passengers. Don't want additional off-islanders coming here. Self-driving cars are coming. You're building the wrong thing. Needs to go back to the drawing board. How can you take away access to islanders?*
- *Bus intercept does not help. Need to look at peak hour numbers with integrated transit service. Ridership numbers are all wrong. Project is planned poorly and should go back to the drawing board.*
- *Parking is hard at the park & ride, can't build anywhere else. Need south end bus service (maybe in Starbucks lot). Should have more direct service to park & ride. Interested in Metro's TripPool program.*
- *Cuts to Metro service on the south end of the island have been harmful as it limits access to the north end. There's also no service on the weekends.*
- *Don't want to lose HOV access. Carpooling – 405 situation; traffic will not flow if HOV access is taken away.*
- *Don't understand bus intercept for MI – makes no sense at all. We only have one way off the island, need reasonable way to get on and off. No need for parking permit (hard with different hours). Can't park at the park-and-ride, full of non-islanders. Population does not have a lot of flexibility. Aing people on island, not just rich people. Public health issues. We need guaranteed spots at the park-and-ride, this is very important. Better service from the southern part of the island is very important. No tolling on I-90 at all.*
- *Safety of bridge is most important. We can't put a car at the existing park-and-ride as it's full by 7:00/7:30, how can we use transit? MI only parking permits would be great. Need better bike/ped amenities. Concerned about the bike trail on I-90 as traffic moves closer and debris might get into bicyclists eyes.*

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- Need commitment from Metro to improve bus service, especially on the southern part of the island. Metro needs to come to the table.
- Need to prove I-90 can accommodate light rail. No restrooms at the station is a problem. Need to address security at the station which could consist of more police. There are no parking spaces and a public hazard will be created with all those buses.
- Need HOV access for island traffic. Concerned about reducing lane widths and the reduction in shoulder. Liked the recent presentation on the track bridge testing and engineering. Overall, very inflexible solutions. Centuries old technology, should be smarter about this. How do we get to the station from the south end? Put a lid over 77th/80th for station and bus intercept. Create dedicated parking for Mercer Island. A new garage could be placed south of 26th next to the existing wall. There is a loss of value to my house as my commute gets longer.
- *Regarding "Other," early and thorough communication is essential. Sound Transit has developed a reputation for insularity and being overly cautious with information. This leads to speculation due to a lack of information, and this is detrimental. Sound Transit should post detailed technical information and studies, not summaries and marketing materials. This information must be better organized online and easy to browse and search. The current Document Archives associated with each project are simply too large to effectively scan, and searching is almost impossible. We shouldn't have to rely on John Niles' website to find technical information. Sound Transit (and WSDOT and King County Metro) needs to be engaged more visibly and often. Examples include delivering briefings to Council, having a presence at MI Farmer's Market, occasional presence at MI P&R during peak. Sound Transit should post updated (quarterly, if not monthly) IRT summaries. Today, you can't find anything about the IRT except that it exists and there are 23 items under review. Sound Transit should post presentation slides online the day after presented. This includes staff reports given to the Board and information presented at public meetings. We shouldn't have to rely on Seattle Transit Blog to get these. Err on the side of posting information, not withholding it. Regarding my ordering of the issues: 2. I live close to the light rail station and am concerned about construction impacts and mitigation. My primary concerns are ensuring that transit service for Mercer Island is enhanced during construction, that station-area construction activities are structured to minimize impact and avoid long detours, and Sound Transit and its contractor(s) are responsive to concerns. 3. Closure of the 77th Ave SE reversible ramp will have a severe negative impact on Mercer Island Town Center access to I-90. The Island Crest Way ramps are of no use to anyone north of SE 40th St. This is of critical importance; the loss of the 77th Ave SE reversible ramp will have serious, permanent, negative impacts on I-90 access, and this is not being mitigated. Addition of an HOV bypass to the 76th Ave SE ramp is of no benefit since it puts you in the mainline, not the R8A HOV lane. 4. I've expressed previous concerns about the 60% station design. The station headhouses have too much bulk and mass at the street level, and more ancillary functions need to be moved to the track level (e.g. the "FCC Room"). I will hold further comment until the 90% designs are shown. 5. Being very near the station, I've been pretty involved with bus integration efforts in the past. I've communicated directly with Sound Transit staff in the past and found them well-informed and professional. I don't oppose the concept, however in general Sound Transit and KC Metro have done a very poor job communicating the benefits, costs, and tradeoffs of bus integration to the larger community. The approach to this has been focused on Mercer Island with no apparent attention paid to South Bellevue, and therefore no analysis of the tradeoffs between the two.*

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Furthermore, Sound Transit and KC Metro need to be willing and able to compromise on the details. There need to be caps on the number of buses, on layover locations and practices, etc. Hopefully you can step back and start again with a higher level overview. 6. Due to traffic congestion, access to Mercer Island is severely restricted during peak hours. This congestion also leads to some amount of cut-through traffic on local roads. I'm not sure what can be done about this, but it would be good to look at this. Also, we need pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements on North Mercer Way between East Mercer Way and 76th Ave SE, around the park and ride, and on SE 24th St between the MICEC and 78th Ave SE. 7. I live close to the park and ride and future station, so parking is irrelevant to me. However, I have two thoughts about parking: A) While I live close by, not everyone does and after the major cuts to transit service on Mercer Island, the only way for most people to access the 550 and light rail will be by driving and parking (side note: the 204 is a joke. 60-minute headways and 12 hours of daily service is not usable transit, it is bare-bones coverage service). Furthermore, lack of parking at the park and ride inevitably leads to people simply driving to their destination. Therefore, it seems reasonable that something needs to be done about parking. The permit program is a good first step, but more needs to be done. B) Since the majority of parking users are from areas other than Town Center and the north end neighborhood around the current park and ride, any additional parking should be located south of I-90. I will submit additional written comments to eastlink@soundtransit.org. Thanks.

- *(1) Senior citizens residence of Mercer Island should have permanent, free parking pass to park in Mercer Island P&R (This comment is in regards to rumors that P&R parking would be restricted to frequent commuters due to limited P&R space. My suggestion is to accommodate those who are retired after contributing to society and want to use Sound Transit.) (2) P&R should have surveillance to monitor abusers (theft, cars abandoned, etc). Registration of cars whose owners are parking to take Light Rail to airport should be required so cars are not ticketed; system with the registration data should be secured so hackers cannot not access information such as address, length of vacation, etc; visible 'vacation' sticker on the car should not be required as that would tip off theft.*
- *Opportunity to increase density on mercer island. I hope the utmost importance is placed on easy connections for transit users and saving money by reducing bus/rail duplication. Also, I am strongly opposed to giving mercer island residents any special access to HOV lanes or toll discounts.*
- *Project must include much improved bus/shuttle service throughout MI to P&R. Hours/frequency must accommodate a band of 6:00am - 8:00pm. Parking should be provided in key locations on the island e.g. possibly improved P&R facilities on Southend and Mid Island.*
- *I am concerned that many initiatives are proceeding without being well thought out. 1. Why is Sound Transit proceeding with Light Rail construction across I-90 when the critical underlying technology (rail based train service across a floating bridge) does not exist? 2. Will Mercer Island residents still have access to HOV lanes as single occupants exiting or entering the Island? 3. Regarding the Bus Turn-Around proposals -- Why bring more buses across the I-90 East Channel bridge (bridges are a choke point), rather than terminating that traffic on the Bellevue side?*
- *Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island*

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Sufficient Mercer Island-dedicated parking capacity at the Park & Ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian, and bike access from all over the Island Immediate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters, then when Light Rail opens, minimized bus congestion on Mercer Island streets and the East Channel Bridge Immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups I-90 construction closures isolated to late nights to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters over contractor convenience.

- *No access for MI to use for express lanes, narrowed lanes, access for off island teachers and staff to get to the island*
- *Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island Sufficient Mercer Island-dedicated parking capacity at the Park & Ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian, and bike access from all over the Island Immediate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters, then when Light Rail opens, minimized bus congestion on Mercer Island streets and the East Channel Bridge Immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups I-90 construction closures isolated to late nights to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters over contractor convenience.*
- *The most important thing to me is for King County to provide quality service for islanders to get to the station. Something that's much better than the route 50 for getting to and from Columbia City Station.*
- *Please make sure that all cross-lake bus routes have a quick, smooth transfer at Mercer Island. Look at the painful bus/rail transfer at Mt. Baker station (and the soon-to-open Husky Stadium station) for examples of what *not* to do. 5 minutes wasted in bus red light time or passenger walk time will add up to thousands of hours each year. There is no need to build a palatial station. Please save time and mass by building as small a station as possible. Finally, please work to give walkers and bikers a safe, easy path to enter/exit the station or catch busses.*
- *The majority of the people using light rail will be from off island. Most will probably be from Issaquah and Bellevue. Therefore, the bus turnaround station should be there.*
- *I am very concerned about the negative impacts to I-90 access that the light rail project will create. I also am strongly opposed to the bus turn-around concept currently being proposed; as if I understand it correctly the plan is to send buses multiple times per hour to Mercer Island and have them turn-around there, which will create significant traffic, noise and pollution. Finally I am very much opposed to any sort of tolling on I-90 for Mercer Island residents, and am concerned about the negative impacts it will create for non-residents who need to commute there such as teachers, business employees, etc.*
- *I-90 is critical to Mercer Island in every way. Light Rail across I-90 is a terrible solution: - it has lower capacity than BRT would have across I-90 (confirmed by Sound Transit) - it has no flexibility (for instance, it won't hit South Lake Union). - trains running every 8 minutes will be an insult to people driving across I-90. The rail will be empty almost all of the time. You cannot overestimate the importance of *driving* off of Mercer Island on I-90. This is our lifeline.*
- *East Link is failed from the start. Stop now and spend the money in ways that would actually improve traffic. I lived in South Seattle during the light rail project, I was very supportive in the*

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beginning. What we got was inferior system on many levels. East link is shaping up to not only be inferior, but flat out irresponsible. It is a technically, operationally, and fiscally a failed program. Many issues exist and I'm just going to list as many as possible given the limited time:

- 11 open engineering issues - 4 were supposed to close by 60% design
- Critical issue remain and the project is slipping
- Closing the center lane for 7 years is not only inconvenient, it simply doesn't make sense. It took 6 years to build the transcontinental railroad.
- Bus turn-around on the island will further increase congestion. This issue will remain as the communities to the East along the I-90 corridor and south towards Renton would still present a need for bus service integration.
- The best headway of the system will be a train every ~7.5 minutes in each direction. This is a capacity constraint based on the downtown Seattle transit tunnel which is dictated by the life safety of the systems.
- The utility of the train is less than a given general lane - people don't just work in downtown cores on 'traditional' schedules.
- When you factor the penalties associated with reduced lane width the extra outer road lanes will not perform as well as the existing ones. This will be especially true when we have off-normal conditions such as accidents or the occasional visiting dignitary.
- We have a transportation system. This includes all modes including our sea and air ports. Transit continues to receive a lionshare of the overall dollars while serving less than 10% of the volume. The transportation system is a network, yet ST analysis in the FEIS ignores the complexity and presents a simplistic analysis that fails to explain critical network effects. Just as traffic shifted north and south when 520 tolling, the WSDOT folks tried going for tolls over I-90 under the guise of balancing the flow, ignoring the network effects.
- Assuming all the other inconveniences are addressed, commuting by transit more than doubles my commute. This will not change with light rail, in fact it will likely get longer. The extra time from transit already would account for my 240 hours of additional time spent commuting in a year.
- Not only is it the time, but timing. To make tonight's meeting I left the office in Seattle at 4:30 and arrived at 5. To take the bus, based on the schedule I would have had to leave at 4:00 to catch the bus.
- Technology is changing. Automatic and autonomous vehicles are coming and will increase capacity of general purpose lanes. It will look really silly at the ribbon cutting of the East Link in 15 years when most vehicles have some level of automation that will support cooperative behaviors. Don't think this is real or possible? How many had smartphones in 2007, less than 10 years ago. What tech changes come in the next few years will be no different. Fixes? Ideas? What are some solutions? I support the idea that we need transit, but it needs to be sustainable.
- Why didn't WSDOT build the R8A configuration years ago? We could use the capacity today.
- Why doesn't WSDOT address the constraints in downtown Seattle? They spent piles of money on Mercer, only to dump the traffic into a constrained I-5. The parkway look with trees and cross walks is nice, but it literally is a 'park' way.
- Why not configure the center roads to 3 lanes? The width is there and constructions could cut those lanes cross lake. Bring those lanes all the way through from I-5 to I-405 with fly-overs to merge HOV traffic efficiently.
- Why not use the rail corridor that exists on the east side to provide a around the lake loop with BRT integrated on cross-lake routes. This could be up and running quickly with little disruption to private property, would cost less and likely service more (I'd want to see some analysis to confirm).
- Crime - I'm guessing ST isn't paying for a likely increase in crime in our community as the result of these changes. Thinking people will reconsider previously held notions and challenge their assumptions. Sound Transit and WSDOT need to do the same.

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- *I heard mention of the South Bellevue P&R being shut down for station construction. Please provide mitigation measures at Mercer Island P&R as it is very difficult to find parking there after 7:35am. Measures could include dedicated MI parking spots in the current lot or an expanded lot with some MI parking spots. I believe that many current SB P&R users will come over to MI P&R.*
- *Please do not use Mercer Island as a bus hub or "turn-around". I understand that you have a situation that requires coordination of bus routes that currently feed into South Bellevue and M.I. But to try to solve that problem by collecting buses on the small M.I. north end would endanger residents' health and the physical safety of pedestrians, cars, and bicycles. To think that running more buses through M.I. Town Center will increase business revenues makes no sense -- it will only make shopping there less attractive. Some other, off-Island, solution for bus traffic can be found. PLEASE NO BUS TURNAROUND ON MERCER ISLAND.*
- *Park and rides cannot have any reservation for Mercer Islanders, park and ride should have permit spaces pricing at \$100/month or more. Light rail must have good access/integration with a bus layover/stop/station.*
- *Light rail construction and light rail system will disrupt HOV access of residents of Mercer Island. Light rail should of been put on 520 instead of I-90.90 since Mercer Islanders only have one access on and off the island*
- *1. Parking at MI P&R is crazy overcrowded. But it will be IMPOSSIBLE to build a P&R big enough. The bigger it is, the more off islanders will park there. The only viable solution is to make it expensive or illegal for off islanders to park there. They should be parking nearer to their homes anyway. 2. I am worried about the loss of express lanes to car traffic. You need to find a way to move more people with busses than are moved with cars. Add trains. Make trains longer. Something. 3. Why use MI for the bus deadheads ? Why not S Belleue? Or Eastgate ? Or both?*
- *Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island Sufficient Mercer Island-dedicated parking capacity at the Park & Ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian, and bike access from all over the Island Immediate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters, then when Light Rail opens, minimized bus congestion on Mercer Island streets and the East Channel Bridge Immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups I-90 construction closures isolated to late nights to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters over contractor convenience*
- *As someone who already must travel many miles to and from work today (I work at Weyerhaeuser in Federal Way), access to I-90 is tantamount today. However, when Weyerhaeuser moves to Seattle, access to the Park and Ride will be equally important. I hope to ride public transit in the future and reserve driving only for special days. Consequently, PLEASE consider the following: -Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving. This is important for work purposes but also our children have activities in Bellevue and with I-90 being our only way to get to and from Mercer Island, this is tantamount. -Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island. While the perception is that MI is very wealthy, there are many people who cannot afford tolls every time they leave the island, including our school teachers coming from off-island to work*

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with our kids, plus store and restaurant workers. -Sufficient Mercer Island-dedicated parking capacity at the Park & Ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian, and bike access from all over the Island. I want to ride public transit when my company moves to Seattle. But I can only do this if I have a place to park my car.

- *No tolls for MI residents or those who work on MI. Better parking at transit center.*
- *It is critical that Island residents and workers on the island have a toll free bridge plus easy access to I 90 and the HOV lane*
- *Bus intercept and bus turnaround should be placed in Issaquah where there is land to handle it! MI cannot handle hundreds of buses the island traffic is already horrific!! Use the eastgate bus terminal to handle the bus turnaround and parking.*
- *1. Bus intercept is a good idea and Mercer Island should accommodate. But ST and Metro need to make firm commitments to limit bus traffic on MI streets. 2. Please DO introduce paid permits for reserved pool of parking spots. Please ALSO consider charging for all parking, at least during times of congestion. 3. My neighbors who demand continued free HOT lane access across the floating bridge are wrong. We have no greater need than south Bellevue and other eastside communities and it is long past time for the special privilege to cease.*
- *1. Light rail will have a negative impact on Mercer Island residents due to the influx of commuters from off island, and from secondary impacts such as causing reduction in access from Mercer Island resident SOVs to I-90 HOV lanes. 2. Light Rail will increase and speed urbanization of a suburban community that has enjoyed, until now, a high quality of life. If people want to live in high density urban environments with high traffic, congestion and apartment towers, let them live in Seattle. 3. Mercer Island residents are stuck with I-90 as our only means of travel between our community and the rest of the state. Light rail decreases our access to that corridor in our personal vehicles while increasing the likelihood of additional unwanted development. 4. I am 100% against the imposition of a Sound Transit "bus turn-around" on Mercer Island. 5. If Seattle wants increased urban density, light rail and bus turn-arounds, let Seattle host them. 6. The Mercer Island Park and Ride lot on the north end of the island is already overrun with off-island commuters. Why should MI host transit development that benefits off-island residents who use lots in our community? Sound Transit, Leave our community alone!*
- *Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island Sufficient Mercer Island-dedicated parking capacity at the Park & Ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian, and bike access from all over the Island Immediate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters, then when Light Rail opens, minimized bus congestion on Mercer Island streets and the East Channel Bridge Immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups I-90 construction closures isolated to late nights to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters over contractor convenience.*
- *I think Mercer Island is an important stop, but it sounds as if current residents don't appreciate it. Please, please don't give residents special privileges in the form permanent SOV access to HOV lanes or resident-only parking. Rather, the goal should be to increase density near the station, including affordable housing. Doing anything else would set a bad precedent for all transit projects, that a few loud, entitled, wealthy residents can get what they want.*

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- *Since I-90 is our only way to get downtown, and you are removing the entire HOV lane section of the bridge for the light-rail, I believe you need to provide better options for islanders to travel to/from work. Without dedicated parking at the ParkandRide on the northend for islanders, we will all drive - and put an additional 10-thousand cars on I-90 daily. If you do designate an HOV lane across westbound I-90, I would expect to have access to this roadway too - otherwise traffic down island crest way will be gridlock each morning during the school year. Thank you.*
- *My biggest concern is safety. How will you get emergency vehicles to accidents given the reduced shoulder? How will accident risk go up given reduced lane width? My second biggest concern relates to this -- how do MI residents, get to a hospital in an emergency during a congested time? Then I'm concerned about teachers commuting to the island. We have a terrific school system because of our teachers. Don't impact that!! Finally I'm concerned about quality of lift -- MI ability to move around the area when our only access is across congested bridges. Please give us access.*
- *I live on the north end of Mercer Island. I am pro Light Rail. I am against a bus intercept here - there is simply not enough space on the roads or otherwise to support this. I also worry about the increased air pollution in our small downtown area. I am pro more parking for the Park and Ride. Would support an expansion. I always wondered why they did not make the Park & Ride bigger as this was developed in the last 10 years. A wasted opportunity! Most definitely we need increased buses on Mercer Island to the Park and Ride to reduce on-island parking there. On the north end, we will be impacted by a sewer replacement project in the near term. We will also be impacted by traffic closures in our neighborhood and on I-90 due to the Light Rail construction. We hope this is managed with thought and care so that we are able to get to work as well as to attend our sons to their off-island sports competition on the weekends.*
- *Love to make sure there is higher frequency access to public transit for older (middle school++) kids going to activities around the island from the schools to the fields on ICW/south end, PEAK, community center, and town center. Additionally this could serve as capacity for adults to reach the light rail from all parts of the island including the south end.*
- *We need to make it easy for MI residents to access I-90 since it is our only route off the island.*
- *I live on mercer island and am concerned about access to medical facilities such as can an ambulance get to me or get me to a hospital if in the event of an emergency. I am afraid of all the closures on I-90 while things get reconfigured the last year when things were closed down to 1 lane I basically felt trapped on the island since leaving or coming back was so awful I couldn't justify leaving. Once every few weeks is bearable but if it is going to close every other week or so that starts to negatively impact my quality of life and events I can do with my family. I also saw a flyer showing the new layout for traffic. It shows a 2" shoulder near the foot traffic (north side) of main line. I am concerned about this in regard it is already hard enough to run across the bridge with traffic. Why not shift the lanes so that there is a 7foot wide shoulder near the foot traffic and a 1 foot shoulder by the HOV lanes? That way if you have to pull over it is in the "slow" lane and there is room to get over if needed.*
- *It seems bad design to collect buses from Issaquah (or any other eastside location) at a Mercer Island light rail station. It seems to make sense to collect those people on the Eastside (at Bellevue station). Even if it means making the Bellevue Avenue station 8x more robust than the planned 2,3, or 4 times. I doubt this more robust expansion would be wasted in future years.*

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The 1st fuel, productivity and the extra emissions that a clogged east channel bridge seems to outweigh the costs of building a very robust (even over-built) Bellevue Station.

- *Concerned about access to I-90 and loss of mobility due to light rail. Mercer Island does not have many critical necessities such as a hospital and other services. Therefore residents need good access to I-90, the only way on/off the Island.*
- *The issues are not defined, so I really do not know what I am ranking. What does "integrated transit service" really mean? If those works are code words for "bus turnaround" then that concept has no place on Mercer Island. We are a residential community, not a commercial or industrial community, with very limited land next to I-90. There is plenty of space, and few conflicts for pedestrians, at the South Bellevue transit station. Mitigation for reduced wetlands can be accomplished almost anywhere. However, a nicely designed, combination bus turn around / commuter / half day parking facility could be successfully constructed on a lid above I-90. "On-island traffic circulation" is very important for Mercer Island. We want to be a standalone town, where we can easily move around our downtown in cars or as pedestrians without fighting traffic not related to our downtown. "Traffic mitigation" seems to be a code word for adding more delays by adding traffic lights to slow traffic staying on Mercer Island. You are not mitigating island traffic impacted by I-90 oriented traffic at Island Crest Way and SE 27th St, or Island Crest Way at SE 26th St. I do not understand what "76th Ave SE ramp closed" is, or how something else nearby could be a "traffic mitigation commitment" (as shown on slide 9). Closing access ramps on 77th Ave SE is not traffic mitigation, but elimination of present access. "Parking" means to me both the ability for me to park and ride the train but also the ability for me to park in downtown Mercer Island to shop, eat, and enjoy the local parks and community events. "Other" means that I have observed no commitment to provide a means for me to get to the light rail station except by private automobile. Even then, I do not believe you have allocated enough curb space to handle rush hours volumes, or short term parking spaces for cars waiting to pick up passengers. I am very distressed to find out that, you are taking away the direct access to HOV lanes for Mercer Island based carpools who want to travel to Seattle. Not only are you reducing my access, and making me fight through regular traffic lanes to get to the HOV lane, but you are also requiring emergency first responders to do the same thing. Most accidents on the bridge will clog the regular lanes, delaying the prompt arrival of emergency medical and fire vehicles.*
- *I am very excited for construction of a new light rail station on Mercer Island. We're very lucky to have easy access to a station, and I am ashamed of my neighbors who are trying to obtain special privileges for themselves.*
- *I am against the bus intercept. Mercer island has a finite space and very few people on the island will benefit from it. The best thing is to bypass the island and go around through Renton and then to Seattle for the light rail. A light rail on the bridge is not practical. Those who live on Mercer island are going to suffer an enormous amount of traffic for others who have alternate routes to get to Seattle. I90 is our lifeline.*
- *We are vehemently opposed to light rail crossing the floating bridge from Mercer Island to Seattle. The bridge is a vital part of transportation between the Eastside, MI and Seattle. Risking untried techniques which may fail or may damage the bridge or shorten its life is a bad idea. Though the engineers mean well, we have to weigh unexpected consequences against benefits. Things don't always go as planned. But let's be totally optimistic and say that the*

engineers know what they're doing, they find viable solutions for the remaining construction and design issues, the design for light rail on the bridge works, and nothing goes wrong. We still end up with reduced capacity for autos, reduced passenger capacity vs. buses, narrower driving lanes, fewer and narrower shoulders, and shoulder width in the tunnel that would not be permitted in a new tunnel due to safety issues. Not to mention the possibility that there will be no room for Islanders by the time the trains get to us. Unless, of course, ridership on Eastlink is below what has been forecast, as is the case with the light rail to the airport. Mass transit should take cars off the road by encouraging drivers to park near their homes, then take trains or buses to their final destination. The current plan will result in many people driving to MI from the Eastside, then taking the light rail for the "last mile." The MI Park and Ride, already overcrowded, will be even worse. And I90 will be more congested than ever, with the loss of the express lanes. The narrower lanes will make accidents more likely, and the aforementioned lack of space in the tunnel will be dangerous. There are too many bad consequences associated with the current plan to make it advisable to proceed. Reserve the middle express lanes for additional buses, which can travel closer together and carry more passengers. You will not need to spend many millions to install tracks nor risk damaging the bridge. If traffic patterns change, you will have much more flexibility. Locating the light rail farther east, ending in Bellevue, is a much better idea.

- *Please provide unrestricted egress and ingress to MI residents, MI employees, MI service workers, MI volunteers, and all other humans. We don't have a choice but to use I-90 or Mass Transit. Encourage MI access with traffic mitigation (eg. access to HOV) and discourage MI access for non-MI residents, workers, services, volunteers, students, etc.*
- *Because of the unique circumstances of Island living, we are forced to take the I-90 to access essential services, like hospitals. This makes our current preferential HOV treatment fair, and I think it is justified in asking for HOV access to Mercer Island residents to continue without tolls.*
- *I would like to see MI residents continue to have access from on and off island to the HOV lanes. I also, do not want I-90 tolled, for the sake of the residents and those that work here.*
- *I SOUNDLY oppose making Mercer Island the transit hub for connecting with light rail. It should NOT be a bus turn-around. Transit riders should get on light rail at the closest station to their home, not ride the bus to MI or drive their cars to MI. Parking should be available at every light rail station.*
- *I need to be able to park and take one method to work on and off peak hours.*
- *Inasmuch as I'm, generally, favorable to Public Transportation, including Light Link Rail through Mercer Island, Island quality and way of life must be preserved. Consequently, with respect to the advent of Light Link Rail and its traffic implications in, around and through Mercer Island on I-90, I'm opposed to Sound Transit's traffic and parking designs for M.I., as follows: -No new or expanded commuter parking on M.I. -Park and Ride parking should remain free to all comers-no "taxes" or "properly authorized" fare increases, which is, effectively, what charging for parking here, amounts to. -No Bus Intercept on M.I. Given the daily, horrendous traffic congestion M.I. experiences through I-90 and on M.I.(N.End), this will become a traffic nightmare, should M.I. host a Transfer Station/Intercept(e.g. International District Station)/Bus Turnaround, instead of a simple Light Rail Stop. South Bellevue P&R has the parking capacity and is logistically suitable for Sound Transit's Light Link/Bus Intercept. Similarly, Eastgate P&R is more suited for a Light Link/Bus Intercept than M.I., for capturing all(originating East of Bellevue) commuter westbound*

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traffic on I-90, rather than exacerbating the traffic bottlenecks M.I. experiences daily. I'm convinced that Sound Transit has not studied these traffic complications carefully; and, I would hope that the M.I. City officials will vigorously oppose Sound Transit's Bus Intercept proposal and direct their attention to an off-Mercer Island location for their purpose.

- *Everyone I know that visits from out of town thinks we are absolutely nuts for converting the two center highway lanes to light rail. Given UW and Microsoft connect over 520, the logical decision should have been to create light rail over the 520. Our politicians and process have been completely corrupted.*
- *Transit oriented density should not be allowed on Mercer... GMA is simply being used as an excuse. A bus intercept on Mercer Island will provide negative value to the island and should not be allowed, full stop.*
- *Light rail on I-90 is a waste of tax payer money. The impacts to I-90 traffic will not be offset by the capacity provided by light rail. The ability for a train to work on a floating bridge is unproven.*
- *The proposed bus turn around on Mercer Island is bad for Mercer Island due to traffic congestion. I live by the current park and ride and it's not easy merging onto I90. The local access streets are jammed with people cutting through on Mercer now. Add lots of busses on the ramps and it will be gridlock. It is bad for commuters because it's not efficient to take three modes of transportation. Drive to bus, ride bus to train, take train to work and then maybe bus from there or walk a few blocks. Light rail needs to be phased in if it is to be successful. People want an easier commute not a worse situation.*
- *I am so excited for light rail to get here! For the next few years, it is going to be a bit rough, but after construction is complete, it is my hope that I can hop on a bus or park my car, grab a train and get to a major hub. It will be a perk to live close to a station, so I believe having a park and ride and a station on the island will be valuable for all residents. I'm a bit sad to lose the privileges we have had in the past, but I believe it will be worth it to have a swift and complete form of mass transit. Thank you to all who are working so hard to gather information and make a thoughtful design and plan.*
- *Traffic increases due to transit access by Sound Transit, Metro and non-residents will result in an increase in the maintenance costs of Mercer Island roads. I didn't find any information on revenue sharing or maintenance cost increases resulting from Light rail construction.*
- *I am vehemently opposed to a bus turn around on MI. Our small island cannot support the increased traffic and idling buses. We do not have the real estate to be a transit hub. There are places east of our community where there is the space for this. I think the voters should be informed that the light rail system they voted for will cost the taxpayers of Seattle and WA far more than it will deliver. By going through with this there won't be the funds available for ANY other transportation projects. Further, even bus service that serves those who can't afford alternative ways means of transportation will suffer. Voters were not adequately informed of all the implications. Finally, we are installing century old systems of transport instead of looking into the future.*
- *Traffic increases due to transit access by Sound Transit, Metro and non-residents will result in an increase in the maintenance costs of Mercer Island roads. I didn't find any information on revenue sharing or maintenance cost increases resulting from Light rail construction. The FHWA indicates 11' lanes have 5% more accidents on freeways than 12' lanes. With the effective*

elimination of shoulders in the design, will this increase in accident rate result in increased congestion across the island and Bellevue? What is the likely increase in traffic congestion that should be expected? How will any increases in congestion be mitigated? The Link Rail will cause the increase in accident rate (although perhaps not directly any individual accident). How will Link Rail mitigate that increase in accident rate? Do the trains really need 14.5' each for their right of way? According to <http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/ABPub/2009/07/10/2009450350.pdf> the trains are less than 9' wide. Is a 14.5' space for train needed more than 12' roadways? It would seem as though the total width could be reduced by 4', restoring 12' lane widths for traffic. What is the environmental impact of the increased accident rate resulting from the lane width reduction? Has this been addressed in the EIS? The links on the sound transit website for EIS documents are all broken with content not found.

- *Sound Transit are not telling us what they are going to do about the safety, the noise, what is going to happen to the buses coming through from Issaquah and Eastgate and need to tell us what is going to happen with the center lane closures, and how the traffic lights and closing down the 76th ramp will help with traffic congestion in the Town Center. These issues all need to be addressed asap before anymore work is done on the Eastlink Light Rail project.*
- *Integrated light rail around and across Lake Washington, fewer cars, buses and motorcycles on roads. More mass transit. Include Newport Shores, Renton into Light Rail. Converting lanes to Hot Lanes should happen when their is more general purpose lanes.*
- *Sound transit is on a seriously faulty, uneconomic, energy and environmentally wasteful, and inefficient path,... for both Mercer Island and the region. 1st - Any independent engineering flow dynamic analysis, queuing theory, or feed back control analysis of the ill-advised MI Train-Bus turnaround schema, for Eastsider's use on MI, will show that the idea is completely inappropriate, won't work, and will actually make transportation worse. And that's not just for normal operations, but the performance will be vastly even worse for rare-normal or non-normal operations. THE IDEA OF A BUS-TRAIN TURNAROUND ON MI NEEDS TO BE COMPLETELY SCRAPPED, NOT TWEAKED. 2nd - Due to effectively having infinite eastside demand compared to MI, the P&R IMMEDIATELY needs to be reallocated at least 90% MI PERMIT USE ONLY. And NOT Just for use of transit riders, but also for use of MI based carpools. It is completely inappropriate to be freezing out local use of our present facilities by OFF-ISLANDERS. Further, NO AMOUNT OF NEW P&R construction on MI will EVER solve the nearly infinite eastside demand source for cheap access to downtown. 3rd - P&Rs ARE NOT MITIGATION for SOV/HOV lane Loss. Immediately, provisions need to be made for PERMANENT ISLANDER POV/SOV access both directions, for both west and east I-90 Bridges. Further, key right-of-way needs to be preserved for future "intelligent vehicles" and NOT squandered on a train to nowhere that can NEVER satisfy true O&D demand. 4th An independent engineering assessment needs to be made IMMEDIATELY for a FHA, FMEA, and SSA for the light rail train across I-90's floating bridge, with a NON-ADVOCATE Review conducted, and the results published to the public. The safety of the light rail train across I-90 has NEVER YET been established by any comprehensive independent engineering analysis, and both the safety and economics of the train remain in serious doubt. In parallel, right-of-way for "intelligent vehicles" needs to be addressed. Intelligent vehicles are the future, NOT already obsolete trains and trollies.. 5th ST3 should be cancelled, being already obsolete, and having little or no benefit to really solving the region's transport needs, at least*

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until and unless the safety and economic viability of the heavily subsidized train across I-90 is addressed. 6th - The heavily subsidized 630 bus and Islander's in Motion program needs to have full cost disclosure, and the full extent of the heavy subsidy disclosure, and then be put to an Island Wide Advisory vote. Both are likely an utter waste of tax money, providing heavy subsidies to those who can already afford it without that heavy subsidy. We live on a finite planet, and on a finite Island. There are limits to growth. Sound transit and the region need to recognize that fact, and substantially change course, before it's too late, and before you make matters even worse. On your present course, you are wasting our tax money, and NOT solving our fundamental transport needs, for the vast majority of users and businesses.

- *Traffic on and off of Mercer Island is presently good, but it is getting progressively worse. Infrastructure is not keeping up with the population. The future looks even worse. Losing the middle lane of I-90 to light rail is a colossal mistake. Light rail should justify it's own infrastructure just like the traffic has. Integrating light rail into the new 520 bridge, or just building a new bridge close to I-90 would have served us much better.*
- *It doesn't seem that the bus turnaround serves a purpose to only get from Mercer Island to Seattle. The point is trying to get the majority of people off the roads that are coming from other places. 1.5 miles is a waste of money.*
- *Getting caught behind lots of buses on & off the rock without express lane access will be very hard to put up with. Plus lots of buses on the island streets in the down town area will make it hard for islanders to move in their own town.*
- *The Mercer Island Light rail station should NOT BE BUILT. Mercer Island residents needs to take a stand that will benefit the region. Rail/Bus/Auto hub needs to be located near the population and geographic center of the Eastside, not in the middle of Lake Washington. MI residents face only added cost of living and degradation of our community by the building of the light rail station and associated high density development of the town center. MI needs to stop the insanity now!*
- *Traffic in this area is terrible and it affects my decisions about where and how to get products and services. Mercer Island is a quiet suburb surrounded by unfettered development on all sides. I do not want the density of my town to increase. I do not want a bus turn around on this little island.*
- *I am disappointed by the lack of a center roadway for cars to travel to Mercer Island from Seattle. I believe that implementing an HOV lane in the regular access will just cause people to get off at MI and then get back on freeway. The HOV lane will jam up!*
- *Mercer Island Bus turnaround/intercept would impact our small town in a negative way substantially. I strongly oppose this idea.*
- *Other: It is VERY IMPORTANT to me that the Bus Intercept not go through, or if it does go through to go with Scenario ONE in which most of the buses continued onto I-90 and changed its route to turn around on MI. It would have been better if Light Rail had gone down through Renton and up past Newcastle to go onto Bellevue and then we'd kept the Center Lanes as they are now and just used buses to cross the bridges. It minimizes wear and tear on the bridge and any risk from optimistic engineering. Plus the travel time to Seattle is the same via bus or light rail--once light rail is done. While Light Rail is being constructed, there will be no light rail for at least 7 years, the Center Lanes will be closed for that whole time (we will lose them forever of course because that is where Light Rail is going) and getting to Seattle will become so onerous*

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that those of us on the Eastside will evolve to depend on Seattle less than before. AND your survey is flawed. People opposed to Light Rail may rank "integrated transit service" high in importance because OPPOSING IT is important to them. In evaluating the result of the survey you need to have a way to take that into account. If you do not, then you have just wasted a lot of money and time.

- *I am very concerned about increased congestion on I-90 and about increased congestion on Mercer Island city streets that lead to/from I-90 access ramps. I'm also concerned about the lack of bus service on the island and lack of parking for Mercer Island residents near the transit station so we can even access transit. Right now, our Park & Ride lot is filled with off-island cars whose drivers live in other distant communities. They drive long distances on the highways from their homes, and then park in the last free parking lot before Seattle --- which is on Mercer Island. They end up taking spots that Mercer Island residents need to use to access transit to Seattle. We get aced out by people doing exactly what they shouldn't be doing --- driving long distances in their cars. They should be using P&R lots close to their homes, not ones far from their homes. Mercer Island needs more P&R spaces near the transit center and for those spaces to be reserved for Island residents only. Otherwise, people from other distant communities will take up the spaces. We need lots of P&R spaces dedicated to Island resident use to help mitigate for loss of use of the center roadway. We need the promised SOV access to the new R&A HOV lanes that will be built in the main line to help mitigate the loss in mobility caused by light rail taking over the center lanes. There has to be enforcement to prevent people from other communities from cutting through the northend of the island pretending to be Mercer Island residents and using the HOV lanes as SOVs. There should be a license plate emblem or sticker given to MI residents that has to be renewed every year or six months and expensive tickets given to off-islanders cutting through and pretending to be coming from the island... maybe put a camera in at access ramps and over the I-90 roadway to take photos of the license plates of the HOV lanes, and if the plate lacks the MI resident sticker... the driver gets a big ticket in the mail. Increased congestion on island streets will be caused by the elimination/reduction of the number of access ramps to I-90, as traffic will have to use fewer streets to get to/from I-90. That problem needs to be addressed/solved. Cut-through traffic needs to be stopped. Right now, lots of cars get off I-90 westbound at East Mercer Way and it travels on MI city streets to 40th and Island Crest Way, and then those cars use the Is. Crest Way tunnel to get to the express lanes or to the fast lane on I-90. Also, many cars now get off westbound I-90 at the Is. Crest Way exit, and instead of staying on the island, that traffic continues onto North Mercer Way past the current bus stop/transit stop and to the intersection of No. Mercer Way and 76th Street where there is an access ramp to I-90 westbound. That traffic is trying to bypass congestion on I-90 across the island by driving instead on island city streets. There is also some of this going on in the eastbound direction --- where traffic gets off of eastbound I-90 at either West Mercer Way or at the 77th Street exit, and then clogs up our small Town Center streets as they cut through the Town Center and re-enter I-90 eastbound at the Is. Crest Way eastbound access ramp. This causes terrible congestion on MI surface streets in the p.m. The exit and access ramps need to be changed to "Local Traffic Only" with some kind of effective enforcement paid for by Sound Transit, WSDOT, King County, Bellevue and Seattle as those were the entities that crammed light rail in the center lanes down MI's throat. Those entities need to pay for the costs of enforcement and mitigation to take care of the impacts of*

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insisting on light rail taking over the center lanes. Congestion on I-90 will be worsened by the loss of two highway lanes due to light rail taking over the two center HOV reversible lanes. More congestion on I-90 should NOT result in longer metering interval times on access ramps for MI residents... we should get a by-pass lane like HOV's get at many ramps --- where MI residents can get through the ramps to access I-90 and are not metered. Non-residents and cut-throughs should get LONG metering intervals to discourage cut-throughs on the island. There has to be mitigation for the longer queues for islanders at access ramps. Before light rail takes over the center lanes, most island residents use the Is. Crest Way tunnel access ramp to westbound I-90 and they can get onto I-90 with NO metering when the express lanes (the center roadway lanes) are open westbound. What mitigation is available to prevent long queues when those center lanes are no longer available? I would suggest a by-pass lane for MI residents to use to get onto I-90 westbound at Is. Crest Way without ANY metering into the new HOV R&A lane, and ample warnings given to on-coming traffic in that HOV lane to yield to in-coming traffic coming in from the left side so they don't run us down from behind or run us into the concrete barrier on the left. HOV traffic in the left lane should slow down for in-coming traffic. It's not that difficult to take the foot off the accelerator and to give in-coming vehicles a brake (sic) and let in cars that are in front of them on the access ramp. Congestion on I-90 across Lake Washington will be worsened not only the loss of two highway lanes but also by the narrowing of the lanes on the main line and through the tunnels, and by the elimination/reduction of shoulders. How is that loss of mobility going to be mitigated? WSDOT and Sound Transit are ruining the efficiency and safety and the operation of I-90 for highway users' use. Transit users don't even pay gas taxes to support their ride on the highways; and everyone in the RTA district and many beyond the RTA district have to pay increased sales taxes to subsidize the transit user. It makes no sense to build the MOST expensive transit mode across I-90, and one that has so many serious impacts on highway vehicle use and on the island. It's not fair. It's not smart. If you want to cut greenhouse gases, transit doesn't do that when transit uses electricity made from burning fossil fuel. PSE burns fossil fuel or buys electricity from entities that burn oil and coal to produce electricity that light rail runs on. Or stop eating meat. Cattle emit green house gas. Or stop drinking beer. Massive amounts of CO2 are emitted by beer makers. And end the passenger cruise lines/ships --- the passenger cruise ships emit huge amounts of diesel green house gases into the air and water, and huge amounts of human sewage/wastes into the water. Why is that being tolerated? Why not end that business and make everyone stay home and watch a movie or TV showing Alaska by sea? Instead, WSDOT and ST are ruining the efficient operation of I-90 --- to save the world. It's so ridiculous. Many more people could take buses across the lake and not disrupt the operation of I-90 the way light rail will, and use less fossil fuel to boot. It takes a lot of electricity to move a light rail train 1 1/2 miles. There will be more frequent and more serious vehicular accidents on I-90 across the lake with light rail in the center lanes. This is predicted in the various EIS reports on the Two-Way Transit & HOV Operation and Eastlink EIS. That situation will increase congestion on I-90 and increase travel time and misery for highway users. Without useable shoulders, this will result in delayed clearing of accidents and delayed/longer emergency personnel response, which in turn will cause more congestion and back-ups for miles and for hours, as it will be so difficult to clear disabled vehicles due to lack of room for tow trucks and emergency vehicles to reach the area for lack of shoulders to travel on and vehicles squeezed onto narrow lanes so close together there will be no room to move over to let tow trucks and

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police/fire/ambulances through. Response time to reach injured persons and vehicles will be delayed. I'm also very concerned about the Mt. Baker tunnels which will have to handle all Eastbound I-90 traffic from Seattle due to loss of use of the reversible center lanes (which are much wider and have shoulders). The old Mt. Baker tunnels will have unusually narrow lanes well narrower than the required standard for interstate highways (10.5 foot wide lanes versus the standard 12 foot wide lanes). Given the high number of large trucks that use I-90 from Seattle, the narrow lanes in the Mt. Baker tunnel and the lack of any shoulder and any emergency walkway will make accidents in the long tunnels more frequent and more dangerous. The old Mt. Baker tunnels were built in the late 1930's/early 1940's when vehicles were narrower and trucks were not as large or as wide. Now, the typical commercial heavy goods truck is 8.6 feet wide for the semi-tractor part, but that does NOT consider their true width mirror to mirror which is closer to 10.5 to 10.7 feet. If two trucks run side by side in the South Bore Mt. Baker tunnel, their mirrors will hit each other or the tunnel walls, and their trailers or van walls or tires may stray and run into/over the lane marker and scare or make contact with a vehicle traveling next to it or cause another vehicle to hit the concrete barrier next to the tunnel wall. Non-professional and professional drivers alike will be nervous and scared or maybe even panicked to have to drive in such a long narrow tunnel. Undoubtedly, passenger cars and trucks will brake hard or conversely will speed up before reaching the merge point where two eastbound I-90 lanes converge at the mouth/entry point to the very narrow old Mt. Baker tunnel. There will be rear-enders when this happens, or side-swipes or vehicles hitting the tunnel walls or concrete barriers and ricocheting. This will occur in a long tunnel section which makes the situation very dangerous not only to the specific vehicles involved in the crash, but also to many other vehicles that will be trapped in the tunnel. There is not sufficient room in the tunnels for rescue personnel or vehicles to reach the area. There is no emergency walkway available for self-rescue. Vehicles will be trapped against each other and the tunnel walls. There won't even be room on the pavement for people to get out of vehicles and walk out of the tunnel. There won't be room for handicapped or disabled persons, or for those with young children or the elderly to manage a way out. Emergency response will be delayed for lack of shoulders and room for cars to move out of the way of responding tow trucks/fire/ambulance/police. In addition to the delayed and more difficult emergency response, WSDOT allowing light rail to take over the center lanes will INCREASE CONGESTION on I-90 for HIGHWAY USERS by reducing the number of available highway lanes; the elimination or reduction of roadway shoulders; the reduction of Mercer Island access to I-90 via elimination of access ramps and exits; likely increased metering intervals for entering Mercer Island traffic; likely long queues on Mercer Island surface streets that lead to I-90; increasing congestion on Mercer Island city streets due to cut-throughs and longer waiting times to get onto I-90; and lack of parking on Mercer Island for Mercer Island residents near the planned northend transit station. I'm also against putting a bus/light rail intercept on Mercer Island. That will ruin Mercer Island's Town Center area near the planned light rail station, with all the noise and commotion and traffic blocking intimidation of platoons of circulating double-articulated buses which will monopolize city streets and intersections, making it harder for Mercer Island traffic to get to/from I-90 as well as getting to the Community Center and main park on Mercer Island --- Luther Burbank Park. It would also make it harder for Mercer Islanders to get to the northend transit station if the roads have lines of buses waiting on city streets or running on city streets and taking over signal control at intersections or simply taking up

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intersection space and streets in the area due to the large size of buses and large turning maneuvers. Add to that, hoards of pedestrians crossing at intersections. That too will make it harder for islanders to access transit and will clog the fewer streets and I-90 access ramps that the island has left that lead to/from I-90. Another problem the bus/light intercept on Mercer Island would bring is the need for more police. There would be more strangers on the island, roaming the island, roaming the downtown area, hanging out at bus stops or at the light rail station or in the parks and paths near the station. Who would have to pay for the added needed police? The situation in downtown Seattle on 3rd Avenue (the bus street) or near Pine and Pike prove that when lots of people hang out near bus stops at all hours of the day and night there is an increase in street crime and assaults and drug-dealing and violence. That creates a scary situation and a dangerous one, and is a nightmare for retail businesses and restaurants and residential buildings when there are roaming groups of thugs or criminals or even teenagers or beggars or homeless persons hanging out around transit station areas. There is more trash/litter. There is public urination and defecation. There are bums sleeping on sidewalks and in parks. Why would Mercer Island want to attract that problem to our small community? Who would pay the police to keep the bums out of the nearby parks and paths and open space and away from kids and adults? A bus/light intercept on the island would bring these problems to the island and who would have to pay for more police and other support (ie picking up trash/litter) for people coming from other communities and not caring about ours or even aiming to harm our community? I think it's crucial and absolutely required mitigation that Mercer Island single occupancy vehicles be able to use the new I-90 R8A HOV lanes that will be built in the outer bridge decks to help mitigate the island's loss of mobility. The island community was promised SOV use of the the I-90 HOV lanes in the original 1976 Memorandum of Agreement. The entire state was promised the continued operation of the reversible express lanes in the center roadway and Mercer Island was promised the continued SOV use of those two lanes in the I-90 Two-Way Transit & HOV Operation FEIS and in its associated federal Record of Decision. I think the R8A roadway improvements should be allowed to actually operate as roadway improvements. That is what the public understood would happen and what improvements were expected to occur, per the EIS process that lead to R8A being selected as the "preferred" alternative. The public should have the opportunity to actually experience the R8A improvements to highway operation, rather than that project never being realized or experienced. The R8A roadway improvements created 10 highway lanes with 1 HOV and 3 GP lanes in each direction 24/7 AND continued operation of the reversible two center lanes for HOV and Mercer Island SOVs in the same fashion as they operate today --- westbound in the a.m.; eastbound in the p.m. The public should be able to experience the planned and selected roadway improvements of R8A for a couple of years to appreciate the improvement in highway congestion over the subject segment, and then given the opportunity to vote again on whether light rail taking over the two center lanes across the lake would be desirable or not. At the time RTA voters were asked to vote on ST2, very few of the negative impacts of light rail in the center lanes was communicated to voters by Sound Transit/WSDOT, and the negative effects were unknown. Voters were ignorant of the impacts. That may have been done on purpose by Sound Transit --- keeping the RTA voters in the dark about the negative impacts. The island community of Mercer Island has long been recognized as needing its own two lanes to/from Seattle, since at least the 1970's and 1980's, and in fact that recognition and requirement was why

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WSDOT/FHWA originally designed I-90 as having 12 lanes with one lane in each direction between Seattle and Mercer Island being dedicated exclusively to island traffic use only. Competent interstate traffic planners understood the need for more highway lanes given the planned growth on the Eastside, and they also understood Mercer Island's need for its own lanes due to the amount of traffic the island already generated and planned or required growth on the island. Being located between Washington's two biggest cities (Seattle & Bellevue) with very significant growth on the Eastside and in trucking expected, highway planners and Mercer Island knew that the island would need its own lanes on I-90 and numerous access/exit ramps to handle the expected traffic. But Seattle politicians insisted on fewer lanes, being the incompetent transportation thinkers/actors that Seattle perennially displays. Mercer Island leadership agreed to compromise on what the transportation experts had determined would be needed and agreed to the 1976 Memorandum of Agreement in order to get I-90 built as opposed to withdrawn by the federal highway authorities. The compromise was that Mercer Island HOV and SOV traffic could use the two I-90 center lanes (the HOV lanes) as single occupant vehicles (SOVs) between Seattle and the Is. Crest Way access ramps on Mercer Island. That was the promise and compromise made instead of the island getting its own two lanes to/from Seattle. The agreement was to share the two center lanes, rather than the island getting its own two lanes (not shared with others). Bus transit and carpools from other communities were to share the two center reversible lanes with island traffic --- HOVS and SOVs. The purpose was to prevent the island from getting "land-locked" by an overly crowded I-90 with too few lanes, where there would be no room left for island traffic to squeeze into with the expected new growth on the Eastside in the communities of Bellevue, Newcastle, Issaquah, Sammamish, etc. That was the only reason why Mercer Island allowed I-90 to come across the island. The island already had a road on and off the island (US 10) which had already been paid for, with Mercer Island tolls, and the debt had been retired. Lynn Peterson (new head of WSDOT) and other newbies to the state lack this institutional history and knowledge about contracts that have been made and expectations and representations made to the public. These are legally enforceable rights. Mercer Island must have free/untolled SOV access to the new R8A outer bridge deck HOV lanes in each direction to/from Seattle consistent with expectation and promises made. The island also needs more parking for Mercer Island residents only, so that there are parking spaces available for our use so we can access transit. Otherwise, people living in other areas will simply drive to the island, and for long distances on the highways, and take up the parking spots. We will get squeezed out of access to transit by people driving long distances. We need frequent bus service on the island paid for by the cities of Bellevue and Seattle and King County and Sound Transit --- the entities that wanted light rail on I-90 across the lake and promised mitigation to the island for its loss of mobility which will be significant. In terms of safety and congestion, I'm very concerned also about R8A cramming in a 4th lane in each direction through the old narrow eastbound Mt. Baker tunnels and through the curving Mercer Island LID tunnels. I'm concerned about narrowed lanes and lack of useable shoulders on the entire segment. I'm concerned about the lack of any emergency walkway or shoulder in the tunnels, and about increased frequency and seriousness of accidents and delayed emergency response due to lack of room in the tunnels and roadway for police/fire/ambulance and tow trucks to reach injured people (or medical incidents without accidents) and to clear disabled vehicles. I'm concerned about ambulances not being able to get to Mercer Island due to traffic, congestion and lack of room for vehicles to

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move over to let ambulances by. In particular, the eastbound I-90 tunnels through Mt. Baker will be very narrow --- dangerously narrow--- at only 10.5 feet wide and with no shoulder whatsoever on either side, and no emergency walkway. With a 4th lane squeezed into the old South Bore tunnel, the lane width will only be 10.5 feet wide. There will be no shoulder. There will be no emergency walkway. This is seriously substandard for interstate highway requirements. Interstate highway standards include 12 foot wide lanes; wide shoulders on both sides of the roadway; elevated emergency walkways in tunnels of substantial length which the Mt. Baker tunnels are. Useable shoulders are required on both the left and right sides so that disabled vehicles, or vehicles that are involved in accidents can move or be moved out of the way of through traffic. Otherwise, there will be increased congestion and delayed and longer times to clear vehicles out of the way. Even a simple rear-ender on a roadway without shoulders can cause miles of back-ups and very lengthy congestion and long travel times. Studies on the Alaska Way Viaduct replacement tunnel recite how lack of shoulders in that tunnel will increase congestion in that tunnel by something on the order of 44% simply because of the lack of shoulders and the consequent effect of vehicles blocking through lanes and delayed response time by tow trucks and emergency vehicles/personnel. This information came out in the discussion/consideration of whether the planned shoulders in the AWV should be used as a third lane during peak commute hours. The research/study lead to the conclusion that would NOT be a good idea due to the increased congestion that would be caused to the other two through lanes IF a shoulder was not available for disabled vehicles and tow trucks/emergency vehicles. Flammable cargo should not be allowed continued use of the I-90 tunnels. It's too dangerous to have gasoline tanker trucks or other hazardous/flammable material trucks traveling in very narrow lanes in the very long Mt. Baker and Mercer Island LID tunnels. There are only two other narrow lane tunnels in the U.S.A. interstate system -- The Holland Tunnel in NYC and one other in New Jersey I think. Both were built in the 1920's or 1930's. I think one may be a bridge rather than a tunnel. Trucks are prohibited from using those narrow tunnels/bridge. WSDOT will be turning Eastbound I-90 into THE MOST DANGEROUS INTERSTATE IN THE USA. The old Mt. Baker tunnels are TOO NARROW and TOO LONG for large trucks to share with passenger vehicles, particularly when there would be no shoulders in the long tunnels and no emergency walkway inside. The only reason why Eastbound I-90 is safe-ish (sic) now, is because now the South Bore Mt. Baker tunnel only has one lane inside and a very wide shoulder. Trucks can take that tunnel safely due to the wide lane and wide shoulder. That will no longer be the case when a second lane is squeezed in there. Also, what make eastbound I-90 safe-ish (sic) now, is the availability of the two express lanes in the center roadway --- giving a choice to drivers to take the wider and safer tunnel through Mt. Baker if the North Bore tunnel is congested or there are trucks heading for that tunnel, or taking the now safer and wider South Bore tunnel with its one wide lane and wide shoulder. When/if light rail takes over the center roadway, those options would no longer be available. ALL EASTBOUND TRUCK, BUS, HOV AND PASSENGER VEHICLES WOULD BE SQUEEZED INTO SUBSTANDARD LANES IN AN UNSAFE AND VERY LONG TUNNEL SETTING THAT HAS NO SHOULDERS AND NO EMERGENCY WALKWAY. Even past WSDOT head, Doug MacDonald, commented that the ONLY reason why flammable cargo was still allowed through the Mt. Baker tunnel eastbound, was because of the existence of the South Bore tunnel and it having one wide lane and wide shoulder. That will NOT be the case if/when light rail takes over the center roadway. This situation of substandard lane width and lack of shoulders and lack

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of emergency walkway is worse in a tunnel setting, particularly in long tunnels, where accidents can result in fires and injuries and vehicles are trapped inside the tunnel. Heavy Goods Vehicles (semi trucks, cement mixers, garbage trucks, container shipping trucks, fuel and milk haulers, heavy equipment haulers, etc.) are usually 10.5 to 10.7 feet wide mirror to mirror. If two trucks run next to each other in the two lanes in the So. Bore tunnel, their mirrors will be scraping the tunnel walls or hitting a truck if two trucks travel side by side in the South Bore tunnel. The trailers themselves or the trailer van sides or tires could hit each other within the confines of the tunnel and narrow lanes. Trucks will slow down to a crawl if two trucks end up running side by side in the tunnel. There will be no useable shoulder in the tunnels. Cars and trucks may careen off of the concrete barriers and over lane markers. There is no "Yield" sign at the merge point where the wide approach lanes of I-90 narrow down to two very narrow lanes at the west entry to the old South Bore Mt. Baker tunnel. Drivers in both lanes will hit the brakes hard or try to speed up to get ahead of another merging truck or car, rather than risking running side by side in the narrow lanes. There will be accidents at the merge/tunnel entry point. All truck traffic will go into the South Bore tunnel when the North Bore tunnel is changed to one HOV lane and one GP lane, as Washington law prohibits commercial trucks from using HOV lanes and also prohibits commercial trucks from using the furthest left (fast) lane on interstate roads that have more than 3 lanes traveling in one direction. That will be the case on I-90 through the Mt. Baker tunnels under R8A with light rail in the center roadway. ALL large commercial trucks will have to use the narrow South Bore tunnel... a change from today's situation where trucks can now use both the North Bore and the South Bore tunnels. Due to the very narrow lanes, regular passenger car vehicles (SOVs) will likely try to avoid the South Bore tunnel due to heavy truck use in narrow lanes. That will reduce the number of useable General Purpose lanes for passenger vehicles and small trucks (ie pick-ups) to just ONE lane eastbound on I-90 as the other lane in the North Bore tunnel will be an HOV lane. This will cause long back-ups on I-90 and likely back-ups from I-90 onto I-5 in both north and south directions as passenger cars (SOVs) all try to avoid the South Bore eastbound I-90 tunnel due to being scared to death if not crushed to death by all the truck traffic that will be shunted into the South Bore tunnel. WSDOT is creating what will be the most dangerous roadway in the interstate highway system, by cramming so much traffic into substandard narrow lanes with no shoulders in the Mt. Baker tunnels. The only reason why R8A was a good idea was because it "retained" and "continued" highway use of the two center roadway lanes so that there were wide lanes with wide shoulders available for use eastbound after 1 p.m., so passenger cars could avoid being in one of the long eastbound tunnels with large trucks running next to them or immediately behind them and trucks could use the South Bore tunnel with its single wide lane and wide shoulder. That is what made R8A work safely in the peak direction --- the availability of the wide HOV lanes in the center roadway. With light rail taking over the center lanes, it turns the eastbound I-90 interstate through the Mt. Baker tunnels into a very dangerous roadway. WSDOT well knows that there will be more frequent accidents and more serious ones. It will take longer to clear the accidents and to reach injured persons. Emergency response will be greatly delayed by congestion and lack of shoulders for access to the accident scene. Even without a blocking accident, increased congestion due to the narrowed lanes and lack of shoulders will make it hard for ambulances to get past congestion and to hospitals and trauma centers --- because there will be no room for vehicles to move into to get out of the way of ambulances or tow trucks or police or fire trucks. The lanes will be too narrow.

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The shoulders will be either totally eliminated or reduced to shoulders that are too narrow to be used. There won't be room to avoid road debris or stuff that has fallen off of cars/trucks. R8A with light rail in the middle lanes will cause tremendous traffic congestion and accidents and delayed injury and incident response. It will make I-90 functionally obsolete and dangerous. Loss of use/access to the I-90 center roadway for highway vehicles will greatly impact mobility (negatively) on Mercer Island and on I-90. It will reduce the ability of Mercer Island residents and people working on the island to get on and off the island via private car or truck. It will cause back-ups on island streets leading to I-90, as access ramps are being eliminated and reduced in number. The combination of loss of access ramps and increased congestion on I-90 will lead to longer metering intervals on the island and longer queues on island approach roads, with much longer time waiting for room to get to the access ramps and onto I-90. That will cause back-ups on island roads leading to I-90, and grid-lock and vastly increased travel time during peak commute periods. I don't think the back-ups and length of queues and increased travel times has ever been studied. I am also concerned about the negative impacts of narrowed lanes and reduced horizontal sight distance and lack of useable shoulders in the curving tunnels on Mercer Island, both westbound and eastbound. That situation will result in increased accident frequency and more serious accidents in the Mercer Island LID tunnels, and slower response time and longer periods of time to clear accidents or disabled vehicles and to reach injured people. This too will cause problems in ambulances and other emergency personnel from getting to island residents' homes if the emergency vehicles or personnel are coming from Seattle or Bellevue. It will take longer for ambulances to leave Mercer Island and get to area hospitals and trauma or emergency rooms due to congested traffic and back-ups on island streets AND on I-90 access ramps and on the I-90 roadway itself. The lanes in the eastbound Mt. Baker tunnels will be dangerously narrow. There will be no safety shoulders nor an emergency egress walkway in the tunnels. The narrow lanes in the eastbound I-90 Mount Baker tunnels are ridiculous, particularly having to share the way too narrow space in long tunnels with large trucks and flammable cargo trucks. WSDOT is creating a very dangerous roadway with R8A and light rail in the center lanes.

Flip chart transcription – recorded at public meeting

- Did the EIS account for potentially higher population growth?
- Need to reevaluate parking needs for MI residents in context of higher ridership at MI P&R lot.
- What's the increase in number of buses as a result of bus intercept and increase number of riders and hours of operation to understand impacts to island.
- Why build light rail – buses should be able to accommodate future growth – more flexible and more economical.
- Why aren't buses ending at various points – why all at MI.
- Should pay more for boarding farther out.
- Lives on 78th – concerned about noise, congestion, pollution caused by increased in buses on MI.
- Cannot see any benefit of train across lake vs. buses.
- Should use shuttles – 550 & 554 – to link with LRT in Bellevue.
- Even if benefit across lake, no benefit to MI – Eastgate better.

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- At least lid the freeway.
- Interest in Metro's TripPool program.
- Cross-lake BRT & run light rail from Renton to Redmond, build P&R along all routes.
- Increase size and utility of South Bellevue P&R.
- Lease the airspace above the Farmers parking lot and add several stories. A continuous shuttle bus could take those people to I-90 to board buses.
- Lid I-90 between 77th and 80th on MI for parking lot and integrated center. Turn over existing MI P&R for MI residents only.

Email comment transcription

- I am sorry that I was unable to share my comments with you in person this evening. I look forward to attending a future "hearing" meeting. My name is Matt Galvin and I am the co-owner of Pagliacci Pizza and Macrina Bakery. As a second generation Islander, I'm thrilled to finally be bringing a Pagliacci, and hopefully a Macrina, to our neighborhood. But I cannot emphasize enough how dependent our business is on mobility. We will employ 40 plus employees that will need to get on, off and around the Island. We have time sensitive, fresh ingredient deliveries arriving from all over the region. Our drivers have only 7 - 10 minutes, without speeding, to get a hot pie from our oven to your door, so if they get snarled in Town Center, commuter or bus traffic, we just can't make that work. And if bakery trucks cannot predictably cross I-90 multiple times per day, a Macrina Bakery on Mercer Island is not viable. Our vendors will need access to the Island and my pricing is predicated on their delivery efficiency. I support the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated to decide on issues that will dramatically impact our mobility and the success of regional transit investments. Specifically:
 - Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving
 - Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island
 - Sufficient, Mercer Island dedicated parking capacity at the Park & Ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian and bike access from all over the Island
 - Immediate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters, then when Light Rail opens, minimized bus congestion on Mercer Island streets and the East Channel Bridge
 - Immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups
 - I-90 construction closures isolated to late nights to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters over contractor convenience
 - Maintaining Islander access to the future HOV lanes from an entrance on 77th Ave SE.

I urge the Council to negotiate fiercely for what is best for the unique geography of Mercer Island and to do so productively, finding win-win opportunities for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs. Thank you for your time and interest in this important topic.

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- Remember WHOOPS? Those cooling towers on the ridge at Satsop are a monument to that stupid idea. A scuba tour under the current I-90 bridge will reveal a monument to the sunken I-90 b ridge caused by the idea that you could fill the pontoons with water and they would still float. Before we have another monument to the stupidity of putting trains on I-90 consider the alternatives.
 - Route the trains through Renton and up the existing right of way on the Eastside.
 - Build a new bridge dedicated to the trains.

Either of these alternatives solve the following major problems:

- Inadequate park and ride capacity
- Adding HOV lanes and reducing lane widths on I-90 below federal standards
- Loss of mobility for Mercer Island
- Bus intercept on Mercer Island
- Construction delays on I-90, the major E-W route from Seattle
- Reduced capacity on I-90

Additionally the current I-90 reversible lanes could be converted to full time HOV lanes by adding a center divider.

- Thank you for the opportunity to provide input as part of the Mercer Island Listening Tour. I appreciate that Sound Transit is soliciting additional public input on issues affecting Mercer Island as part of the construction and operation of East Link and related projects. My comments will generally cover the same topics as listed in the online survey and comment form (parking, integrated transit service, station design, I-90 access, light rail construction, and on-island traffic circulation/mitigation). They are not in priority order, but are organized for convenience.

I-90 access

The current 77th Ave SE reversible ramp is essential for connectivity to Town Center. The Island Crest Way ramps are not useful to anyone north of SE 40th Street due to the ramp configuration. Closure of the 77th Ave SE reversible ramp is a permanent significant impact which is not being adequately mitigated. The proposed HOV bypass lane at the 76th Ave SE westbound onramp is not sufficient as it only accommodates westbound traffic, and not well due to the narrowness of the existing ramp and lack of HOV direct access. As currently planned eastbound access will be marginally acceptable because a quick right-turn onto SE 30th St from Island Crest Way into Town Center is possible, but this is still out-of-direction for anyone north of I-90. Point being, you're going to require people to either weave from the inside HOV lane to the outside 77th Ave SE mainline ramp, or to circle through Town Center. Bi-directional HOV direct access at 77th Ave SE is critical, the same as it is at 80th Ave SE. HOV-direct access ramps at 77th Ave SE are also critical to maintaining transit speed and reliability during the construction of East Link in the 2017-2023 period.

East Link Construction Mitigation

East Link construction will have significant impacts on Mercer Island. Most notably this will include impacts to existing transit service and ongoing construction activities around the light

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rail station area. I've previously addressed station area construction mitigation, but I'll briefly summarize here:

- Maintain pedestrian access along both 80th and 77th. There is pedestrian access on only one side of these overpasses, so closure of a pathway forces a lengthy walking detour. If closure of a pathway is necessary, a temporary pathway should be placed in the roadway (taking a lane) with concrete barriers, not just cones.
- Hopefully noise won't be an issue against the background of general I-90 noise, however take steps to minimize noise. Be mindful that north of I-90 is a residential area.
- The landscaping along the 77th and 80th overpasses is generally in poor shape, so please select better/more durable plants for restoration. Who will be responsible for maintenance of landscaping once the station opens? The City has been responsible for maintenance since I-90 was reconstructed in the 1980s/90s and has done a poor job. Existing trees should be maintained if at all possible as it takes years for newly planted small trees to grow.
- Please do something about the intersection of North Mercer Way and 77th Ave SE. Someone is probably going to get seriously injured or killed here eventually, most likely a pedestrian or cyclist. A traffic signal should be installed sooner rather than later.

Mitigation for impacts to existing transit service can be best met by operational adjustments to ST Express 550 and 554 in conjunction with capital improvements associated with the R8A outer roadway HOV lane construction and in Seattle and Bellevue. The 550 should be maintained in the tunnel as long as possible. I've heard various dates for all buses coming out of the DSTT, including 2017 (for Convention Center expansion), 2019 (for International District Station [IDS] turnback track construction), and 2021 (for Northgate Link opening). I'll state this unequivocally: buses should be removed from the tunnel when light rail projects that replace them force those buses out. This means the 70-series should remain until U-Link opens early in 2016, the 41 should remain until Northgate Link opens in 2021, and the 550 should remain in the tunnel until East Link construction and completion forces it out. The "orphan" routes (101, 102, 106, 150, and 255) may be removed as necessary. If the Convention Center advocates can't figure out how to work around Convention Place Station (CPS), they should delay their project. If this requires Sound Transit to take early full ownership of the DSTT to exert legal control and authority, I would encourage Sound Transit to do so. The DSTT is too important to the regional transportation network to close early solely for a convention center; closing the DSTT to buses for convention center expansion is akin to closing I-5 under the Convention Center for a similar purpose. Instead of constructing a turnback track at IDS, Sound Transit should consider using the space to build a center platform instead since IDS will be a major transfer point. Sound Transit should provide a full study of the benefits and drawbacks for both a center platform and a turnback track, and publish the full study, so that we can be fully informed as to the tradeoffs between the two (since you couldn't build both).

Operational adjustments:

ST Express 550 Frequency and span of service:

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- 10-minute base service on weekdays. 5:00am to 7:00pm excluding peak hours.
- 15-minute weekday evening service 7:00pm to 10:00pm.
- 15-minute base service on weekends (both Saturday and Sunday) from 6:00am to 7:00pm.
- Peak frequency commensurate with demand, provided it is no worse than the base service frequency.
- No worse than 30-minute frequency at all other times.
- Same span of service as Link (e.g. 5:00am to 1:00am M-Sa, 6:00am-midnight Su).
- Base frequency is bi-directional. Peak frequency can be directional to accommodate demand.
 - ST Express 554 Frequency and span of service:
- 5-minute base service on weekdays. 5:00am to 7:00pm excluding peak hours.
- Peak frequency commensurate with demand, provided it is no worse than the base service frequency.
- No worse than 30-minute frequency at all other times.
- Span of service 5:00am to midnight weekdays, 6:00am to midnight weekends.
- Base frequency is bi-directional. Peak frequency can be directional to accommodate demand.

Capital Improvements

HOV direct-access ramps at 77th Ave SE to/from the west.

- Good transit pathway in Seattle. Loss of the D2 roadway between Rainier Ave S and 5th/Dearborn/Airport Way will result in increased transit times entering and leaving Seattle, affecting not just ST Express 550 and 554 but also King County Metro peak express service. I see two obvious options to address this: Use the 4th Avenue ramps, or use Rainier/Dearborn. 4th Avenue seems preferable since it gives more direct access to the DSTT for the 550 and also minimizes the number of turns for the 554 (the 554 would go direct via 4th Ave and not jog to 5th Ave in this scenario). A Rainier/Dearborn pathway would require capital improvements such as bus lanes and signal priority to maintain speed and reliability. Using Rainier/Dearborn also precludes easy access to the R8A HOV lanes due to the Rainier ramp configuration.
- Priority treatments in Bellevue. I have emailed your main customer service people (main@soundtransit.org) many times that the 550's jog from Bellevue Transit Center to Bellevue Way via NE 4th St contributes to the 550's evening unreliability. This should be addressed via a combination of things:
 - Aggressive transit signal priority at Bellevue Way/4th, 4th/106th, and 4th/108th.
 - Dedicated right-turn signal phase at 4th/108th; pedestrian traffic causes the turn from southbound 108th to westbound 4th to be difficult at peak.
 - Consideration of using 108th Ave NE and Main St in lieu of the current pathway.
- The inbound 554's current stop at 5th Ave/farside Jackson is too far from IDS for effective transfers to the DSTT and transit service along Jackson Street including the First Hill Streetcar. This is due to the need for two street crossings to get to the DSTT and eastbound service on Jackson. The stop should be moved to 5th Ave/nearside Jackson. The outbound 554's stop at 5th and Jackson is perfectly located directly

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adjacent to the DSTT entrances. Moving the 554 to 4th Avenue would negate the need for this improvement.

Parking

This is a tough one. In general, I don't favor providing additional free parking due to the massive capital expense (\$30,000+ per stall). Assuming 30-year financing, this is \$4 per workday per stall just in construction costs, to say nothing of financing and maintenance costs. I much prefer to enhance connecting bus service and avoid vehicle trips at all, rather than simply capturing/shortening vehicle trips at intermediate points. Also, since I live within easy walking distance of the current park and ride and the future light rail station, parking is not a direct concern of mine; I don't need to park! With that said, Mercer Island is mostly low-density and has significant connectivity issues in its transportation network due to topography and the low density suburban built environment. That isn't going to change in the near future (and is beyond Sound Transit's ability to directly influence), but unfortunately it means expanded and enhanced connecting bus service probably won't work on its own. Since expanding the current park and ride presents difficulties and there are limited/no locations close to the station suitable to build more parking, it may be necessary to consider building satellite parking lots and connecting them to the station area with enhanced transit. Another possibility is finding a location within the Town Center area (e.g. within walking distance of the light rail station) to construct additional parking. Aside from that, I encourage Sound Transit to accelerate implementation (faster than fall 2016) of the permit parking program, and also consider charging for all parking at the current park and ride (or charging more at Mercer Island than at other lots). Charging for parking may have the effect of reducing off-island drivers from utilizing the Mercer Island Park and Ride simply because it costs money, and other lots (such as South Bellevue or Eastgate) would be priced less/free.

Bus Integration

In general, I remain a supporter of the bus integration concept. I appreciate the hard work that has gone into the idea so far. It seems like Sound Transit and King County Metro need to take a step back and perform an in-depth analysis of the various benefits and drawbacks of Mercer Island vs. South Bellevue. I would imagine you're looking at 4 scenarios for capital planning purposes:

1. Mercer Island only
2. South Bellevue only
3. Mercer Island and South Bellevue in combination
4. No bus intercept

I heard anecdotally that one of the stumbling blocks was Sound Transit and/or King County Metro's unwillingness to compromise on operational restrictions such as number of buses per hour, number per day, number laying over, etc. These operational restrictions are one of the areas of great interest for Mercer Island beyond the physical design of any facility to accommodate bus intercept. Bus intercept may bring with it a need to upgrade the light rail station's facilities to accommodate higher than projected ridership. These improvements could include more TVMs, more ORCA readers, platform design adjustments including a larger canopy,

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etc. I thought the most recent option, now “off the table,” was probably reasonable enough as a starting point. While I wasn’t terribly excited about converting most of the 80th Ave overpass to pavement, this design had the advantages of minimizing bus traffic on Mercer Island city streets while also eliminating street crossings for pedestrians. With that option off the table and limited capital funds available, the problem of how to physically implement bus intercept is tricky. I wanted to put a few more ideas out for your consideration:

- Use of Sunset Highway SE. While the City has previously not been amenable to this option, it would allow for clockwise circulation and preservation of landscaped areas. Downsides include longer circulation on local streets and impacts to the sculpture garden.
- Roundabout at 76th Ave SE/N Mercer Way. This option was considered earlier in the process and dismissed. While it was never fully analyzed, now could be a good time to do so. Drawbacks include longer circulation on local streets, conflicts with the I-90 westbound onramp, and passengers needing to cross the street to access the station.
- Acquisition of Mercer Island Service Station and Auto Spa properties. While I have historically been quite opposed to property acquisitions, I feel this is at least worth taking a look at. The properties would appear to be large enough to accommodate bus turnaround and layover areas. Beyond the site acquisition issues, passenger walking distance is sub-optimal and conflicts at the busy 80th Ave SE/SE 28th St intersection could be difficult to mitigate.
- As an alternative to the above, I wonder how much it would cost to lid over the exposed ICW offramps between 80th Ave SE and Island Crest Way east of the above properties. There appears to be plenty of physical space, but it may be cost prohibitive, and the same pedestrian and traffic problems apply.
- Finally, please consider another rebuild of the existing park and ride facility. You could integrate a bus facility on the ground floor/underground while providing more parking space on top. I will state that I am not crazy about this as I wouldn’t like to see a taller/larger park and ride facility built, however in the grand scheme of things this may be the least worst option. Major drawbacks for this include loss of the facility during construction, vehicular access, and neighborhood impacts. In particular, the access issue may be insurmountable; you would ideally want to segregate bus and car access, but the only other access to the P&R is the right in-right out access on North Mercer Way midway between 80th and 77th; hardly a good location for primary car ingress/egress.

On-Island Circulation

As traffic on I-90 has worsened, cut-through traffic on Mercer Island local streets has increased. This has particularly led to major backups on the East Mercer offramp and more traffic on North Mercer Way. To be entirely honest, I don’t see what you can do about this. The City of Mercer Island could certainly take action of some kind, but short of tolling the freeway ramps I don’t see what anybody could legally do to limit access to public roads. It would be helpful if WSDOT could assist to quantify the problem, if a problem truly exists, by deploying license plate readers or other technology so we can get accurate counts of traffic and match it to vehicle registration information, like Sound Transit does for park and ride usage. Access for

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the neighborhood immediately surrounding the park and ride remains an issue. There are only a few access points, and two of them are heavily impacted by cut-through traffic. Again, I'm not sure what you could do about it. Perhaps installing a traffic signal at 81st Ave SE and North Mercer Way would help.

Communication

To some extent, Sound Transit is suffering from self-inflicted wounds when it comes to Mercer Island issues. This is not solely Sound Transit's fault; some fault also lies with the City administration, WSDOT, and King County (Metro). However, some items are within Sound Transit's ability to directly address. There is a perception among some Islanders that Sound Transit is aloof and provides information in an overly sanitized manner. While I personally may not fully agree with this, I will say that it would be helpful if Sound Transit would err on the side of posting information on their website, rather than not posting information. For example, Powerpoint slides for staff reports to the Sound Transit Board and committees are not published anywhere; I have to get them from Seattle Transit Blog or other sources. Technical reports concerning capital projects referred to by staff or referred to in public display materials often are not available online; again, I have to get them from Seattle Transit Blog, or the City, or elsewhere.

This is what leads to a perception of aloofness and overly sanitized messaging. Public engagement is important, and while frankly we all know there is a certain amount of listening solely to listen, listening is an important part of the public discourse. Lack of information from Sound Transit and other official sources leads to speculation, informed or otherwise. Speculation leads to wild ideas or claims about various subjects, for example the perception that light rail is not buildable across the floating bridge. This is not productive and serves no one's purposes, except maybe Sound Transit's detractors. I encourage Sound Transit, WSDOT, King County, and the City to be more forthcoming with information and also more proactive with project updates. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Transcript of microphone comments from 9/24/15 public meeting – recorded by court reporter

- Good evening. My name is Ben Starnes, and I've lived on Mercer Island for nine years. My wife and I chose to raise our kids here because Mercer Island is a great community but also because of its close proximity to my job. You see, I'm the chief of vascular surgery for Harborview and all of UW Medicine. When you hear those medevac helicopters bringing in a car-accident victim or a gunshot victim, I'm the guy sprinting from my kids' soccer game to hop in the car and get to Harborview as quickly as possible. The tragic events that transpired today on the Aurora Bridge today should wake everyone up. If those students were your kids, would you want me stuck in traffic on a bridge? Prior to coming to Seattle, I spent 15 years of honorable service in the United States Army. I've served on the front lines in Kosovo and Iraq and even treated casualties at the Pentagon on September the 11th, 2001. People in my line of work don't scare easily. But what does scare me is the prospect of losing mobility. I don't -I don't want someone to die because I'm sitting in traffic. I support the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated to decide on issues that will dramatically impact our mobility and the success of

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regional transit investments. Specifically, I support permanent access to I-90 HOV and HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405, and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving. I support permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the island. I support sufficient Mercer Island dedicated parking capacity at the park-and-ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian, and bike access from all over the island. I support immediate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters. Then when light rail opens, minimize bus congestion on Mercer Island streets and the East Channel Bridge. I support immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups and increasing the risk of accidents. And, finally, I support I-90 construction closures isolated to nights. Why not do it late at night to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters over contractor convenience? I urge the council to negotiate fiercely for what is the best for the unique geography of Mercer Island, and to do so productively, finding win-win opportunities for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs. I'm a doctor. I care about people. And I hope that Sound Transit cares about people too. Thank you for your time and privilege of the podium.

- Thank you. I'm Joy Langley. I live on the north end. My family relocated here about a year ago. And I commend the elected officials in the room, and the Department of Transportation. Thank you for being here and hearing our comments. So we moved here, and my husband works on the island, where our four-year-old and one-year-old are also in school. I commute daily into Seattle. We are a one-car family. So I typically bike down, lock up my bike, take the bus in, take the bus back, bike home. We chose this area because of the access to fantastic public education, because of the proximity to Seattle, and because of the wonderful quality of life that we appreciate here. One would presume -- and we moved here from Washington, D.C. -- that we're familiar with traffic congestion. And I'm familiar with that, that we've experienced recently from visiting dignitaries. But I'm awestruck. Even with the 495 traffic in Washington, D.C., you have commuting going from one direction into the city and then from another direction out of the city. And what's happened in this region is we've got travel coming from the north to the south, from the east to west, and all over. And the status quo isn't sustainable. This congestion isn't just bad for everyone on the island; it's bad for the region. And it's especially challenging for families with young children like ours. My daughters matriculate with other students who are from as far as west Seattle, from as far as Issaquah. So the families come in, drop off children, work, and then come back. So that's extraordinarily challenging for them. For my family, having access to great public transportation is essential, and right now that's not particularly happening. Regardless of my planned commute, if I arrive early to just be on time, the busses are over capacity at the Mercer Island park-and-ride. It really doesn't matter if it's at 7 a.m., if it's at 8:30, if it's at 10:30. The busses are already full. It's very frustrating for those of us who have to wait longer times. I'm supportive of additional public transportation options, but it has to be done right and in a way that supports mobility on Mercer Island. I urge the council again, as the previous speaker did, to negotiate to support the unique geography of Mercer Island. And among those solutions are the permanent access to I-90 HOV, permanent exemption of Mercer Island from tolls and congestion pricing, sufficient dedicated parking at the park-and-ride, immediate availability of seats on those busses, reduction of the I-90 cut-through. We live on 40th, so that's -- you see people cutting through going 50 miles an hour on 40th while my kids are riding their bikes in the driveway. So thank you so much for this opportunity. And I encourage those in the room to just think critically to solve -- to help us solve our transportation

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concerns. Thank you.

- I'm Charlie Neff. I live on Mercer Island, about 13 years, and at 4356 92nd Avenue. You're going to hear a lot of comments on the particulars of the issues in front of us. I want to make an overall procedural comment. I would like to have more community involvement. I'd like to have it focused in the best way so that it can have real influence. I sense that, so far, many of our meetings have been piecemeal. We know that we've got an almost perfect storm of issues. There are at least five major ones, whether they are the intercept project or ramps or closing of I-90. We know what the issues are, and you're going to hear more about them tonight. But what we really lack is an overall flowchart of which agencies are going to have the responsibility for making decisions on these issues, and as much as possible, a timeline moving forward. Otherwise we'll have more and more meetings, and people will express their opinions, but there's no chance of understanding where those opinions are directed and what they might be able to affect. So for those of -- all of you who are involved with the decision process, I'd sure like to see a good road map. And I think it would help all of us. Thank you.
- I'm Nancy Gordon. And you've probably seen me on TV talking about head lice, because that's what I do. Our small business -- I've never been told I'm quiet. Sorry. Our small business, Lice Knowing You, was started in my garage here on Mercer Island almost nine years ago. And our first salon is still located in the Town Center on Mercer Island. When you get that dreaded call that your child has head lice -- and we've all been there -- you want help fast. We pride ourselves in getting worried parents and kids into one of our four Seattle salons quickly. But that means customers and employees are coming from all over at all times of the day and can get stuck in gridlock. The more I learn about the complex mobility issues facing the island, the more deeply I'm concerned about the future viability of our Mercer Island location. Mobility on and off -- mobility on, off, and around the island is critical for my business and customers. I support the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated to decide on issues that will dramatically impact our mobility and the success of regional transit investments. I hope we can all find a way to work together to find the most viable solution. Thanks.
- Hi. My name is Lori Otto Punke, and I'm executive director of Vision Mercer Island. Our mission is to help educate people on the complex transportation issues facing Mercer Island and the region. We dug in and -- we dug in deeply on the issues. We've talked to residents. We've talked to experts. And we've talked to businesses alike. And we've conducted a comprehensive survey with islanders. And here are three observations: One, islanders aren't special, but Mercer Island is a unique geography and a unique situation. Nowhere else in the U.S. exists such a large and populated island wedged between a major metro core and its close suburbs connected only by -- connected only by a primary interstate. This obviously presents some unique transportation challenges, and Mercer Island has longstanding contractual rights because of this. Our survey is still open, so we don't have final data yet. But I can tell you that the response has been incredible. And the overwhelming majority do care about the issues and want the council to negotiate fiercely. But islanders also have a long history of working collaboratively for the region on transportation issues, and we'll do it again now. Two, all of the issues being discussed have win-win solutions. Being obstructionists will not help our transportation realities, and neither will a government entity's reflexive reaction to say, "We can't do that." Encouraging transit ridership, preventing gridlock, mitigating disruptions are goals shared by Mercer Island, transportation agencies, and the region. So whether we're talking about parking, HOV lanes, tolls, bus intercepts, direct access ramps, shuttle service, cut-throughs, or construction closures,

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or any other part of this integrated picture, let's all recognize that what is good for Mercer Island can also be good for regional transportation. Three, this must be a public process, but it can be a constructive one. If Sound Transit wrote Mercer Island a big check right now, we'd have beautiful parks and we would still have gridlock. We have to negotiate a comprehensive solution with appropriate public input. Nobody wants a repeat of other adversarial processes that we've seen play out. So what I would say to the officials here is, thank you for listening, and please, please, please incorporate what islanders are saying. And to the islanders participating, thank you for speaking up, and thank you for being constructive in the process. In the 1970s, people were skeptical that a deal on I-90 could be reached. If everyone is educated about the transportation realities we face today, we could have another once-in-a-generation opportunity for Mercer Island to be a leader in win-win transportation solutions. Thank you.

- Hi. I'm Erin Sirianni. My address is [REDACTED]. I'm a mom of two boys at Island Park Elementary. We've lived on Mercer Island for about five years. My husband and I grew up here, so I've been visiting a lot longer than that. And I love calling Mercer Island my home. I work in the community as a Realtor for Windermere Mercer Island, and I also publish a community website and newsletter called My Mercer Island. Since this is such a hot topic of discussion in our community, I wrote an article on transportation changes coming to our island. And I just wanted to share a little bit of what I learned. I began the article with an excerpt from John Donne's poem, No Man is an Island, and here it is again:

No man is an island
Entire of itself
Eveery man is a piee of the continent
A part from the main

These words ring true about our own community. We are a unique municipality within King County with our own school district, chamber of commerce, and ZIP code, and yet we are dependent on our greater community for medical care, emergency responders, employment, and more, made possible most fundamentally by two stretches of bridge on I-90. Now Mercer Island has become a highly desirable place for families to live because of our ease of access to both Seattle and the east side. But upcoming transportation changes could set us back in time when mobility was a huge issue for islanders. Because we only have a handful -- and now we only have a handful of entries and exits to the island. The upcoming changes to transportation with the light-rail expansion will impact islanders dramatically. During the 1960s, the island dealt with similar issues with the proposed expansion of I-90. You might recall that the initial plans for the expansion included the installation of a 13-lane bridge constructed similarly to the Alaskan Way Viaduct across the island. Islanders organized in vehement opposition to this plan and fought for a redesign of the expansion. Then-Mayor Aubrey Davis is famous for his fighting words, "As for I-90, we don't want to see it, we don't want to hear it, we don't want to smell it." The behemoth structure was ultimately eliminated from the plan, and a new plan was executed, which included islander HOV access rights and the Park on the Lid, now named Aubrey Davis Park, an expansive park built on top of I-90 to protect Mercer Island neighborhoods from freeway disturbances. Most importantly, it was a solution that benefitted both Mercer Island and the greater community. The island has a rich history of addressing these challenges successfully in a way that benefits the island the region together. I am hopeful that the City of Mercer Island may work with Sound Transit and the Washington State Department of Transportation to arrive at similar solutions. I appreciate Sound Transit's time in hosting this

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important meeting. Thank you.

- Hi, my name is Cindy Corujo, and I'm a longtime employee at Island Books. I don't live on the island. I live in Seattle, in Leschi. The would have to come to work and go home for work from Lake Washington by way of Fourth and Dearborn, and then to Mercer Island. It was quite time-consuming. So, but I'm here today as a representative of Island Books. I have a letter from the new owner of Island Book -- of Island Books, Laurie Raisys, which I'll read in a moment after I make a few comments of my own. As a worker on the island, I depend on the traffic flow to work for me to be where I need to be. I'm affected weekly by traffic issues. I support Vision Mercer Island selfishly and specifically on permanent access to HOV lanes, accessibility for access, permanent exemption from toll fees and congestion charges, and that the construction closures be limited to nighttime, when their impact on traffic is less significant. That said, the place of my employment is also affected by the -- I lost my place. At any rate, my economic welfare depends on the accessibility of the place that I work, to have people come in and buy things. So basically that's that. And I support the efforts to -- of Vision Mercer Island. And I won't go through separate points other than the ones that are -- matter to me. Now, Laurie's letter, quickly: "I'm a longtime Mercer Island resident and the proud owner of Island Books. Island Books has been on Mercer Island since 1973, and we are one of the top independent booksellers of our size in the nation. Most of my staff do not live on the island. As all of us look at the traffic situation now, it's bad. And I'm afraid it's going to get worse with some of the changes we're hearing about. "The ability for a business like Island Books to be successful depends a lot on mobility. Getting on, off, and around Mercer Island is critical for our employees, suppliers, and perhaps most importantly, our customers. Island Books is depending on the regional transportation investments to improve mobility for all, regardless of whether you use a bus, car, car pool, or bicycle. "The more I learn about the complex mobility issues facing the island, the more deeply I am concerned about the future viability of not just our store, but other retailers on Mercer Island. I support the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated to decide on issues that will dramatically impact our mobility and the success of regional transit investments. "I urge the council to negotiate fiercely for what is best for the geography of Mercer Island, and do so productively, finding workable opportunities for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs." And I would like to submit Laurie's letter.
- As stated, I'm Alex Baumgarten. And some years ago, I heard that every time there is a transportation closure, it takes 20 years for people to regain the time that is lost during that closure. So what we are talking about is the next 20 years of our lives. A trivial matter perhaps to some of us, but perhaps a greater consideration to others. The other thing is that it is said that the devil is in the details, and it is the details which I think need to concern us. For instance, one of those details -- and now you have heard one physician earlier, so now you are hearing another one. I'm also concerned about accidents. The accidents that are caused by the overburdened traffic and the narrowing of the lanes. Because I-90 is an intercontinental highway, because there are a lot of trucks, I would suggest that one of those details concern keeping one of the lanes at the existing width and restricting all truck traffic, with appropriate penalties of course, to that lane so that the trucks do not intermingle with cars and contribute to accidents. Another one of those details is the question of population growth throughout the whole region. I do not understand clearly how that is going to be managed together with a reasonable number of busses coming to Mercer Island. So I would think that one of those details could well be a projection of some space for the turnaround of those busses, the number of busses presumably increasing as

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the population grows, and the usage of light rail increases, so that those busses would not impact on downtown traffic. Couple of instances. I'm sure there are many more than I and others could comment on. So I shall leave now and let others (inaudible).

- My name is Sarah Weinberg. I've lived on the island for 34 years. One of my children and two of my grandchildren have graduated -- one this -- coming this year -- from Mercer Island High School. But I'm bringing a slightly different perspective to this. I grew up in Boston, Massachusetts, in the '40s and '50s. We had an underground transit system there that was already 50 years old at that time. It's now a hundred years old. It's still there. It's still working. It's doing great. We have been focusing here on what's going to happen during the construction over the next 20 years, maybe, at the outside. We need to -- yes, we need to mitigate that. But we really need to pay attention to, what will our great-grandchildren think about this in a hundred years? Because it's going to be here in a hundred years. First of all, all the government entities must cooperate. Mercer Island, City, Metro, Sound Transit, WSDOT. And the federal government's in there too: Interstate highway. They all need to cooperate. They can't say, "You -- we'll do this, but you pay for it." They've got to cooperate. And we need to do it even if it costs a lot more. Now, constructive suggestion: Build the transit center under the -- at the -- the train station at the bottom. Build a lid over Mercer Island between -- over the freeway between 78th -- 77th and 80th. Build the bus turnaround on that, that's over the freeway; it isn't on any of the existing streets. Build a parking garage that won't fall down like the other one did, above -- above that. Then, and also build a pedestrian overpass that goes into 78th Street into the downtown. Then you have something that our great-grandchildren, my great-great-grandchildren, will be glad to use. Thank you.
- I'm Sarah Tobis. I'm a marketing and communications manager at the Stroum Jewish Community Center on East Mercer Way. We've been paying close attention to transportation issues facing our island, and I wanted to share how critical mobility is for the JCC, our employees, our members, and our guests. Our 250 year-round employees, which grows to 400 seasonally, serve more than 15,000 people every year, including 195 children for preschool, close to a thousand summer day campers, and over 500 seniors, plus many more members and guests. Our employees and members commute to the J from all over the metro area via cars, car pools, and busses. I-90 traffic is so bad, it's impacting our business. Last month, a promising young teacher reluctantly backed out of accepting a job offer after a test run of her commute. I fear for the safety of our employees who walk over 30 minutes each way in the dark to and from the park-and-ride since the bus route on 36th was closed quite some time ago. I watch every day as preschoolers wait in our classrooms for road-weary parents delayed by traffic both on I-90 and in our Town Center. While light rail will certainly help some, the resulting increase in car traffic will hurt others. These are big, complicated issues that will have a dramatic impact on our business. It is critically important that everyone be educated on the changes and ramifications to make sure Mercer Island benefits from this massive investment. We, too, support what's best for the unique geography of Mercer Island. Specifically, we support current access to I-90 HOV lanes for all Mercer Island traffic. We support permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing. We support sufficient Mercer Island dedicated parking capacity at the park-and-ride and Town Center, with shuttle access at pedestrian and bike access from all over the island. We support immediate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters, and immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs our local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backup. Thank you. Thank you to the council for

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negotiating on behalf of Mercer Island and finding the best solution for transportation needs.

- Larry McWilliams, on 86th Avenue Southeast. I think I feel, and many, that we're considered a doormat here for Seattle or other parts of the Puget Sound, and I don't like it. Bus barn, that I call it, is silly. I would point out that most of us came here by car tonight because at this time of day there's no bus service on the island. In some of the materials that I've read, there's going to be a period of time when the HOV would be taken out of service for nine months, but nothing would happen to it except weeds growing while we drove by it. The parking lot over at south Bellevue is the same situation, where they say they're going to close the park-and-ride, maybe put some parking lots in, another park-and-ride in, another lot in. And I think that's -- the sequence is wrong. A lot of the stuff the State does is out of sequence. I'm not -- I'm not pleased with any of it. I support Dr. Starnes' earlier comments on access to the various routes, HOV lanes. I dislike anybody getting to pay to ride in the HOV lanes. I think they should be opened up to the general public and not available for people that can pay for it. The park-and-ride belongs to us. It may be somebody else's money at first. And the State, and certainly Sound Transit -- it answers to nobody -- has the ability to figure out a way to give us that park-and-ride for a dollar a year, and we'll even do the maintenance on it. And they can fix it if it falls down. But that should be a parking lot that's here for the residents here. I'm surprised that Bellevue hasn't started complaining more about south Bellevue park-and-ride that is always full also, yet the State and Sound Transit, the -- yeah, Sound Transit encourage carbon footprint, encourage cars on I-90 by allowing people to drive from Cle Elum or Ellensburg, all the way into Mercer Island to park in the morning. That's ludicrous. People should be parking at the park-and-ride where they live. The solution back there -- One of the solutions back there is a permit, which spells greed. We don't need to pay for a permit to park in the parking lot here. Stupid. So thanks very much. I appreciate your time.
- My name is Randy Koehler, and I live up here in First Hill. My wife and I have lived here on the island for 45 years, and my wife for 55. I've had my home-building business here for almost 40 years. I chose Mercer Island not only for its sense of community, but for its central location. I used to be 20 minutes from everywhere, because I was building all over and Mercer Island was a convenient location. Now I'm dating myself. You know you can't get anywhere in 20 minutes anymore. But mobility is essential for my business and my employees. When I look at the transportation issues before I see a complex interconnected set of decisions policies. The I-90 corridor is critical to our us, and whole regional system. Ensuring mobility on and off and around Mercer Island means we're keeping traffic flowing on I-90, which is a win for everybody. I'm glad to see this is a public process, and I hope that people can sit down and negotiate an intelligent deal. Because what we do today will impact our mobility for decades to come. It isn't just critical to my business and Mercer Island. It is critical for the region. I support the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated to decide on issues that will dramatically impact our mobility and success of regional transit investments. I would like to see, at the least, permanent access to I-90 HOV and HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to and from Seattle and 405, and sufficient direct-access ramp to provide -- you know, from -- prevent lane weaving. This is what we bargained for back in '76 and now lost, for whatever reason. I would like to see a permanent exemption for Mercer Island from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the island. My employees on any given day may go on and off the island six or eight times, and I'm sure other businesses are in the same boat. It's not tolling them back and forth and not having their place of work. People won't come to shop or eat if they have to pay a toll. I urge the council to negotiate fairly is best for the unique geography of Mercer and to do so productively,

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finding win-win opportunities for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs. Thank you for their interest.

- My name is Carrie Wernick, and I have lived on Mercer Island for eight 8 years and in King County for nearly 25 years. And 9 since moving to the island, I've noticed an increase in the noise. That's what I'm going to talk about, noise pollution. At first I thought I was a little crazy. I've lived in King County 25 years and I've never received any postcards saying it's going to be noisy, we're doing construction. And since moving here, it seems like they're increasing more and more frequently, where I started to actually collect these little cards, thinking this is crazy. But the construction just keeps continuing and continuing. And I appreciate the noise and the construction happening at night so it doesn't clog up all the traffic during the day. But sometimes the noise is so loud, it keeps me awake at night, even with earplugs. And I thought, Is it just me again? And talked to several neighbors, and no, it was waking them up at 2, 3 a.m. So it wasn't just me. And I tried to write some letters to WSDOT, King County, Mercer Island, and just got the runaround. They said, "The noise issue and the walls, oh, that belongs to them. That's on Mercer Island property. Talk to this person." I just kept getting the runaround, the runaround, and I gave up. I still have those letters, some in my hand here. And I felt hopeless. But what I did hear is that they are testing the sound. And I'm wondering when are they testing the sound. They -- testing it when it's raining, when it's a whole lot louder. Are they looking at the direction of the wind? Although, either way, it's north or south. You're going to hit either side of Mercer Island. But it's raining or wet most of the year, and it's much louder during those times. I'm curious when -- you know, what's the weather like? Also, are they testing when all these compression brakes are going on with these trucks? They're extremely loud, the compression brakes. So I just think, when you really need to factor in with all this construction, the increase in population, the increase in cars going back and forth, we are having an increase in noise. And this really needs to be addressed. So I am advocating for higher walls, more walls, to take into consideration the new pavement. They are coming up with more -- I don't know -- a newer kind of pavement that reduces the noise. So I really suggest that they do a lot of those kind of solutions now while this construction is happening. It's only going to increase. And the noise pollution is definitely getting worse. And this all needs to be addressed. Thank you.
- My name is Jim Stanton. I've lived on the island for about 30 years, on the south end, on 78th Street. I also work with a number of people who have worked with the City or advocate with the City for better infrastructure and safer streets, particularly for bicyclists. I think it's fair to say, that as a group, we share Vision Mercer Island's view of the need for holistic solution and hope that the city council will negotiate fiercely, for one, to try to find win-win solutions. But I do want to focus on one item for a minute, and that is bicycling. A large number of our group have been or are currently commuting daily to both Bellevue and Seattle on bicycles. There's also a tremendous amount of bicycle traffic that's running across the north end of Mercer Island on the I-90 pedestrian/bicycle corridor. It is currently inadequate. And those numbers are going to go up. They'll go up because of, the construction will make car traffic and mass transit less attractive. They'll go up because both Seattle and east side communities are spending an enhancing their bicycle infrastructure. It'll go up because of population growth. Every one of those cyclists is one less person on the road. The areas that ought to be looked is at are parking at the park-and-ride. It's tough to leave a bicycle out there. There's very limited spaces, and it can't -- doesn't serve the needs of the casual bicyclist. The current east-and-west bicycle path runs right through the bus stop in front of the park-and-ride. That should have never happened. And we've tried to find what

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it takes to reroute the bicyclists behind, and we have -- I have been given a lot of pointing at other people. But that's something that needs to be done. The other thing is we're told that residents at Shoreline sometimes drive their car to the park-and-ride because the area between -- sorry -- Shorewood Apartments and the park-and-ride is dark, narrow, and there are a lot of cyclists on it. So pedestrians are worried about -- about walking that far. So again, that takes up more spaces in the -- in the park-and-ride that can't be used for people coming from different parts of the island. Anyway, I hope somebody will pay attention to some opportunities to enhance bicycle traffic across the island, to reduce the number of cars that are the obvious alternative. Thank you.

- John Hanlon, Mercer Island, Washington. So I got a lot of points to cover, so I'm going to try to talk fast. East Link is failed from the start. It's advised to stop now and spend the money in ways that would actually improve traffic. I've lived in south Seattle during the light-rail project. And that project, it was very supportive from the start. What we got was an inferior system on many levels. East Link is shaping up to not only be inferior, but flat-out irresponsible. It's technically, operationally, and fiscally failed. Many issues exist. And I'm just going to list as many as possible, given the limited time. 11 open engineering issues; four were supposed to close by 60 percent design. Critical issues remain. Project is slipping. More money has been requested. Closing the center lane for years is not only a inconvenience; it doesn't make sense. It took only six years to build the transcontinental railroad. Bus turnaround on the island will further increase congestion. This issue will remain as communities to the east along the I-90 corridor and south towards Renton will still have bus service that needs to be integrated in the system someplace. Best headway of the system will be a train every seven and a half minutes in each direction. This is a capacity constraint based on the downtown Seattle transit tunnel, which is dictated by the life safety of the systems that -- or the life safety systems in that -- in that tunnel. And the utility of the train is less than a general-purpose lane. People just don't go from downtown core to Mercer Island or -- and people have alternate schedules, demands that they just can't go from A to B in that sort of a linear line as the train projects. When you factor in the penalties associated with the reduced lane width, the extra outer road lanes will not perform as well as existing ones. This will be especially true when we have off-normal conditions such as accidents or the occasional visiting dignitary. We have a transportation system. This includes all modes, our sea and airports. Transit continues to receive a lion's share of the dollars while serving less than ten percent of the volume on the system. The transportation system is a network, yet ST analysis in the FEIS ignores the complexity and presents a simplistic screenline analysis that fails to explain critical network effects. Just as traffic shifted north and south when 520 tolling started, WSDOT folks tried going for tolls on I-90 under the guise of balancing the flow, ignoring network effects. Assuming that the outer -- all the other inconveniences were addressed, commuting by transit more than doubles my personal commute. This will not change with the light rail, and in fact, based on projected times, will increasingly get longer. The extra time is already -- would add an additional -- if I took transit every day, would add 240 hours to my commute time every year. I would love that time back. I can't afford it, so I drive. Not only is it time, but it's timing. To make it tonight, I would have to have left the office a half hour earlier than I did, which I also cannot afford to do. Technology is changing. Automatic and autonomous vehicles are coming and will increase capacity of our general-purpose lanes. It will look really silly at the ribbon cutting of East Link in 15 years when the vehicles have some level of automation, will support cooperative behaviors, and will increase beyond what we can expect today. Don't think it real possible? How many smartphones does everybody have in here? Those have been around since around 2006, less than ten years ago. What technology changes come in the next few years will be no different, nor less significant.

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What are the fixes and ideas? Why not build our configuration and we can use the capacity today, and why not actually spend the money on a corridor along the east from Renton to Redmond. Thank you.

- I'm Judith Baxter. I am a former resident of Mercer Island. Both my girls graduated from Mercer Island High School. And I've been working on Mercer Island for eight years. Right now I'm employed by Mercer Island Presbyterian Church. I love my job at the church. And I love this island. It welcomed me with open arms since we moved here from Alabama 11 years ago. Every day now I commute from Issaquah to the island. I can make it from my home to the island in 15, 20 minutes on the weekend. On weekdays, if I leave before 7 in the morning, I can make it here in 20 minutes. If I leave at 7:15, it takes me at least half an hour, if not longer. It's really important to me that we are thinking about how I-90 is moving and how the traffic is moving on the island. It's also important to me that we do this, because I want to stay involved with the island and on the island. If we start having tolls and increasing commute times, it becomes cost-prohibitive for me to keep with this job. And for my daughter, who's worked every summer for the past three years with Youth & Family Services, she's not going to be able to keep that job. So I wanted you to know that I especially appreciate and support Vision Mercer Island for what they're doing to help educate people on what's going on, on the issues. Because it's really important for everybody to understand so that you all can make decisions on the mobility and the success of the transport system. I want you to know that I particularly appreciate the idea of having permanent access for HOV lanes and for residents. I know, because I lived here, and being able to -- you have no other way on and off. But also for your employees. You've got teachers at the high school that don't live on this island and need to get on and off. And they need to be able to get here in time for school to start. I also support my time, work on the island, on interstate, on I-90. I'm sorry about the noise. it does make a difference about getting people on and off the island. The other thing I wanted to point out is how important it is to have adequate parking at the park-and-ride. Sometimes when my daughter and I came in, we'd want to leave the car at the park-and -- I've got to finish it up. You all did a fabulous job with this, and think about it. Thank you.
- Good evening. My name Michael Finn, and I've lived on Mercer Island 33 years. And I'm sure that your intent is to make transportation better. And I want to encourage you to make it better for Mercer Island. There's an old saying: "Don't be a pigeon." Ever heard that? It's, don't just fly in, drop your stuff, and leave. And don't roll your eyes. There's another old saying: "Leave the campground better than you found it." So I'm hoping that your intent is to make transportation better in this area, and I'm hoping your intent is to make it better for Mercer Island. And that should be a goal. And to do this, I think, it's important to see what transportation conditions exist here now so that you have a baseline and then make it better. And if you don't know how to do that, ask an engineer. He'll figure it out for you. And everybody isn't going to take a bicycle. But right now, that's kind of what we have to do. There's very little transportation to and from this wonderful device that's coming in here, the light rail. I also cannot imagine putting a huge transportation hub here in the Mercer Island Town Center. That just doesn't make sense to me. I mean, I could see you putting it in some open space somewhere. That's, like, just inappropriate. So I thank you for your time, and wish you luck with what you're doing and hope it works out well for everybody. Thank you.
- My name's Jessica Crump, and I'm a mom. I have two young children. And my husband and I both work downtown. And we are both involved in preschool PTA and elementary school PTA. And we

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actually take the bus every day. And I'm a big fan of the bus. So thank you, the busses. I will say that I actually think 8 a.m. is generous. I think that we have to leave our house before 7 every day to make sure that we have a spot. If I have any activities going on where I'd like to do something at my children's school, I have to drive and I have to -- which takes me actually longer than it does to take the bus, and it costs me \$25 a day. So what I would actually like to see are some creative solutions. I don't want to see more parking. I actually would love to see better ways to get from the south end of the island to the north end of the island. And I've heard of creative solutions, like on-demand shuttles and things that make it possible for you to easily get from your home, when you want to get there, at whatever time of day that works for you. So, yeah, I'd love to never touch my car all day. And I look forward to the results of light rail, but I--again, I think we need a way to get to light rail from the south end. Thank you.

- Hi. My name is Jared Lundell. My wife and I moved here to Mercer Island about five years ago. We chose Mercer Island both for the excellent schools and also for its location. I work in downtown Seattle, so the close proximity and the mobility and the ease of getting around was a major choice in our choosing to come here. I share the concerns raised by Mayor Bassett and Vision Mercer Island of all the specific issues that this process is going to raise for Mercer Island. When I first moved to Mercer Island, I took a bus every day in to work, and it worked -- it worked reasonably well. And I stopped doing that a few years ago. The reason I stopped doing that was, I typically could not get a spot at the park-and-ride anymore. And the unreliability and nonavailability of that made it not worth the effort and the hassle of trying to take the bus. So I am a car (inaudible). With the center lanes closing, I will probably re-evaluate that in a couple years. But for me, the most important thing is, there's got to be a way to get to the train and to the busses, otherwise they're not worth anything to us. So anything that we can do to increase access to the park-and-ride -- whether that's capacity, whether that's permits -- you know, I think there's various options. I don't know what the best one is. But that's my primary concern. The other concern is, again, the loss of the access to the center lanes. That will be a big issue for all of us that live here on the island. This is not just about, you know, a few minutes on -- tacked onto my morning and evening commutes and for those of us who commute every day. The ability to get on and off the island is a major impact on the quality of life in all aspects of your life here on the island, because not everything's here. There's no hospitals here on the island. There's very few primary care physicians. We're down to one grocery store now. There's lots of things that you really just have to leave the island for. It's not just work. It's -- lots of these things are not optional. This is a major quality-of-life issue for us, which is why you see so many people here tonight. And I appreciate the interest and involvement of everyone here on the island and trying to make sure that this turns out in a workable solution for us. Thank you.
- I'm Tom Imrich, [REDACTED]. Been an islander for decades and worked in the field of transportation engineering related fields for a whole entire career. So I'm able to work these corridor studies way back in the '60s and '70s. And I, too, rode the MTA in Boston, and that's the reason why they wrote the song (inaudible) off the MTA. Sound Transit is on a seriously faulty and uneconomic, energy and environmentally wasteful and inefficient path for Mercer Island and the region. First, any independent engineering fluid dynamic analysis, queueing theory, feedback control analysis of the ill-advised Mercer Island train/bus turnaround scheme for east-siders' use of Mercer Island will show that the idea is completely inappropriate, won't work, and will actually make the transportation problem worse, not better. And that's not just for normal operations, but performance will be vastly even worse for rare-normal or normal operations. The idea of a

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bus/train turnaround on Mercer Island needs to be completely scrapped, not tweaked. Second, due to effectively having infinite east-side demand compared to Mercer Island, the park-and-ride immediately needs to be reallocated at least 90 percent (inaudible) permit parking only, and not just for transit riders, but also for use of Mercer-Island-based car pools. It's completely inappropriate to be freezing out local use of our present facilities by off-islanders. Further, (inaudible) park-and-ride construction to Mercer Island will never solve the nearly infinite east-side demand source for cheap access to downtown. We've found people, as another speaker said, from Cle Elum, Issaquah and Enumclaw and North Bend, even at the south-end parts of our lot. Third, park-and-rides are not mitigation for HOV lane loss. No way. Immediately, provisions need to be made for permanent islander POV/SOV access both directions, both bridges, east and west. Further, the right-of-way needs to be preserved for future intelligent vehicles and not squandered on a train to nowhere that will never truly satisfy (inaudible) demand. Fourth -- immediately for a functional hazard assessment, a failure modes and effects analysis, and a systems safety assessment for the light-rail train to nowhere across I-90's floating bridge now, with a non-advocate review conducted and the results published and available to the public. The safety of the light-rail train across I-90 has never yet been established by any comprehensive independent engineering analysis, and both safety and economics of the train remain serious doubt. Fifth, ST3 should be scrapped and canceled, being already obsolete and having little or no benefit, certainly for Mercer Island, to really solving the region's transport needs, at least until and unless the safety and economic viability of a subsidized train across I-90 is addressed. We live on a finite planet on a limited island. We need to recognize that and change direction.

- Thank you very much. My name is Jackie Dunbar, and I live at the south end of Mercer Island. And I've lived here for about 20 years. And so I have a number of questions. They're general questions. My first question would be: Why are we having a listening tour now when the Sound Transit East Link bus LRT system integration study is more than two years old -- and probably older, but that was the latest date I saw in here -- and million of dollars have been spent implementing it? And if I were a suspicious person, I would think maybe there is an election coming soon. Why was this route chosen before the engineering studies had been completed to ensure the safety of the train to use the Mercer Island I-90 bridge? And is this report a pro forma? And if so, why was \$20 million just given to complete studies? Why did you close the South Mercer park-and-ride, which forces people to park on Mercer Island? Where are we supposed to park for five years? Why have you planned a bus intercept on Mercer Island, which is the smallest and least sustainable piece of real estate on the east side? The biggest land mass is on the east side of the water, not on Mercer Island. What about increased busses in the future? How will they be integrated into the system you presently designed for the bus intercept? How can you suggest that having hundreds of busses in a limited fiscal environment will not affect the air quality and consequently the quality of life on Mercer Island, included but not limited to our health and the ability to travel around the island and to leave the island? If you want long-term sustainability, why are you making sustainability impossible? Why do you want to ruin the character of our island and neighborhoods by parking busses on the island? If you notify the Mercer Island residents, particularly those on the north end or near freeway ramps, that their property can and will be taken using eminent domain, have you explained to them what eminent domain means and how it affects their property rights? Does Sound Transit have -- does the plans Sound Transit has developed show the location of the train/bus barn mentioned in The Seattle Times? And can you tell us that you will never support a toll for I-90? And in closing, I would like to thank all of my fellow citizens who have come tonight and made comments. I have learned a lot from all of you,

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and I thank you very much, because I know it's hard for all of us to get here. And everybody is really right. You cannot get here from the south end. I've tried to use public transportation for years. You cannot go to the airport and come home from the airport and get to your house on south-end Mercer Island. It doesn't connect. So what good is the public transport?

- Good evening. It's heartwarming to see everybody here. I am one of the people who've helped launch Vision Mercer Island. And reason for doing so is, 35 years ago my first child emerged on a bridge, where he was nearly born, and we were very fortunate to reach Swedish Hospital. We left at 6:20, 6:25 in the morning, and we were stuck on the bridge for about 20 minutes. For those of you -- that was in 1980. Things got worse for the next seven or eight years -- actually, nine years -- until the bridge opened in 1989. For those of you who have been here, you know it was a horrible period of six, seven years. And I understand this project is expected to take seven or eight years as well. And I don't want to live through the days like we did back then, when if you didn't leave by 6 or 6:15, you probably didn't get into downtown Seattle till 9:30 or 10. Hundreds of us used to wait in cafes for the traffic to diminish. So I'm participating because I realize, if we don't participate and help frame a solution, we'll be left behind by those who make the decisions without our considerations. So Vision Mercer Island wants to be part of the educational process to help alert people to the issues. And such as two years ago when I attended one of the sessions here, and I think we're at the 40 percent, maybe the 60 percent completion, and it was nothing like what we're seeing today, and there were no answers. A lot of questions, a lot of lack of planning. During the tunnel project and rebuild in 19 -- from the '80s, traffic was so bad that it would back up on Island Crest Way to 40th. And on -- at West Mercer, it would be backed up south to 40th also. Those days are coming again. I see that. We're going to be stuck with that due to the construction that's going to hit. So one of the things that's important of Mercer Island is being able to bring people here. I just had some plumbing work done last week. And when I got the bill for two guys for two hours and it was 960 bucks, I asked, Why was it so expensive? He said, Well, that's the "Mercer Island" premium. And I said, What's the hourly rate? He says, \$197.50 an hour. I said, What's the 50 cents for? He said, Well, that's just part of the "Mercer Island" premium. I said, Why? He says, Because it's such a pain in the you-know-what to get here and to leave. So they figure, if they can't get here by 7 in 25 the morning, they actually don't want to come. It's very, very inconvenient to come here. The same is true for teachers, firemen, all the other people who work here. We need to provide a system that enables everyone who needs to come here to work, to get here, rather than choosing not to. Because if people choose not to come here, our property values will end up suffering. Thank you.
- You just did. First of all, Bret's not here. He left. And there were probably 50 or 60 people out there that left as well, and a lot of them have the same feelings and thoughts that we've heard tonight. My name is Tom Acker. I'm a candidate for city council. I'm running against Mayor Bassett. And I got involved with the Save our Suburbs group. And there have been -- there are so many Save our Suburbs members here tonight. It's just fantastic to see. And I support the Mercer Vision group as well. Bret did too. So what I want to say is that, if light rail is the solution, it can't be done with the significant consequences to our community that have been proposed so far. When you talk about building a new park-and-ride for light rail and you talk about paving one of our parks, it's a bad thing. It's a bad thing for our community. The gentleman who talked about, when you get to the campground, leave it in better condition than when you came: You know, if you build a parking lot like that, you're never going to put it back to the environment. Heck, we were up on Luther Burbank the other day, and we saw deer up on the hill. So, you know, we don't

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have much of an environment left in what we -- in the inner city. And we are a part of the inner city just by definition, because we're sandwiched between two. Let's keep our environment as to the point that we -- people around us and on the other side of the pond can appreciate what we value in our community. Secondly, there's no reason why we can't get the north-end park-and-ride back. I've talked to Benson Wong on the city council. For six months I was pushing for an answer. And they -- there's no reason why we can't. I'm not saying it can be done, but there's no reason why we can't if we decouple the financial interest. I'd also like to say, if light rail is the solution, let's have a rail station, not a bus intercept. A bus intercept is something that is like -- it's a word to make it sexy and cool, but it's not. When we looked at the numbers, running 84 busses per hour through Town Center is not increasing our quality of life. There are different scenarios back there. You can look at Scenario 3, Scenario 4, 24 and all the left-hand turns that go through. It's not a good solution. We want to work with Sound Transit. There are hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people that are involved with Save our Suburbs and now Mercer Vision as well. So we have the community support. We have the engagement. Now we really need the commitment of our council and of the regional politicians to do this in a way that leaves the campground better. Not just for Mercer Islanders, because this isn't just about Mercer Island. It's about the region. And Mercer Island is a place where people can come and enjoy the community. And if we pave it, we build it up, we build it out, and we vibrate it with these train models and the degradation of the bridge deck, it can be a very bad thing. And I guess I'd like to close with that. I want to see the engineering studies, the traffic-flow studies, the on-island traffic flow, the off-island traffic flow, and the through-island traffic flow. And I do not want to see our level of services degraded from Level C to Level D. That's a big issue to us. So I'll close with that. Thank you very much, and have a good evening.

- My name is Sarah Fletcher, and I live just by park-and-ride at [REDACTED]. And I'd like to bring up some points now while Sound Transit is in the design stage rather than during the construction stage when it will be too late. We've found that the noise level where we live has got extremely high. So what we've done is, we've been taking our own decibel reading using the iPhone decibel app. And by North Mercer Way, we're getting a decibel reading of between 70 and 97 -- I'm sorry -- between 89 and 97 decibels, whereas if you just come to the other side of the building where the parking lot is, on the same street as where Sound Transit put their monitoring equipment, it's at 70. Where Sound Transit put their original monitoring equipment, they've been placing them in very quiet areas where there's not much traffic. And not only that, but there's a big wall that acts as a buffer. And if there's not a wall, there's a whole forest between the freeway and the location of where the monitoring was. And so anyway, so it's now -- sorry. Okay. So I contacted Sound Transit about the problem, and they said it's a Washington State Department of Transport problem. But Washington State Department of Transport won an award for excellence in quieter-pavement research. And they were doing these tests using the onboard sound intensity measurement, but Sound Transit hadn't been using it. And the (inaudible) was that the Department of Transport came up with asphalt tends to be quieter than concrete, but we've got concrete, and also that noise barriers have been the most effective method for reducing traffic noise. So we need to get the barriers up now before Sound Transit continue with anything more. And I suggest that that light rail ends at Mercer Island and doesn't go all the way across to downtown, and that the busses coming from Eastgate and Issaquah can pick people up at Mercer Island and take them all way through. The parking can be further out. And I thought they could have nonstop busses now; they don't need to wait until light rail. And I just hope that they'll come up with something now to solve the noise issues. And also there's an

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ordinance -- sorry -- oops. Oh, yeah. And sorry. One other thing. Oh. And it says that noise nuisance code, which would not be applicable to the project, and the WAC would go on construction noise. Thank you.

- I'm Jim Eanes. I've lived on the island now I think about 15 years. For the last ten years, at the request of the mayor at that time, I started working on pedestrian/bicycle issues on the island. Jim Stanton did a good job of talking about bicycle issues. So I'm going to talk about pedestrian. And while I was listening, I got to thinking maybe I'm fighting against myself. One of the issues -- I live on 76th Avenue, right off the Town Center. And most of my neighbors actually drive to the park-and-ride. They get up early to make sure they get one of the parking spots. And the reason is, it's challenging if you walk, especially in the wintertime. The reason it may be counter of my own interest, is they always offer me a drive down to the park-and-ride because I always walk. So maybe it isn't good to fix pedestrian issues on the island, because otherwise I won't get so many offers for rides. As we're looking at everything, I think it's really important to look at pedestrian access to the transit center. What that'll do is two things. One is, it'll get people out of the parking spots that don't need to be there, because I don't live but not even a mile away. And also it opens up access to other parking lots we have on the island so people have other Mercer-Island-only transit parking areas. So I want to emphasize that. And the other thing is, want to thank the city council members for being here and also Sound Transit people. And thank you.
- Good evening. I'm Scott Kuznicki. I'd like to thank the Washington State Department of Transportation Secretary Peterson for being here. It's great to see you again. And I know there's a number of folks from WSDOT here. And that's wonderful. Because WSDOT and Sound Transit have to work so closely together to deliver this project and ensure that it doesn't adversely impact Mercer Island, that it serves the needs of the region. And we talked about all these adverse impacts. And I'd kind of like to make some encouragements this evening to the folks from Sound Transit and WSDOT that are here. As a traffic engineer, I moved to the Mercer Island in 2007. I live in the Town Center with my wife. And we love it here. The quality of life is wonderful. We love the emphasis on public safety access. And we like the access to the rest of the region. And I'll tell you that I'm a person who does use transit to get to downtown Bellevue and downtown Seattle. I also use my bicycle. Obviously I'm doing that. Looking pretty good these days. And -- but I also -- sometimes I need to use a car. And sometimes these other options are not options. And so we need to recognize that. Preserving on- and off-island access is very important. So I want to make some encouragement. My first encouragement is to Washington State DOT. You have \$16 billion. I think that's pretty cool. Could we move 405 up a little bit? Because I think that the section of 405 between Bellevue and Renton is really a key to regional mobility. And relieving congestion in that corridor as quickly as possible will relieve congestion on I-90. I'm quite sure, from looking at the models, that that will happen. And I also want to encourage WSDOT as I think about tolling -- and I had a chance to work on the tolling project a number of years ago and look at the option for Mercer Island -- to really consider the environmental justice aspects of tolling all on- and off-island traffic. Because as a number of people have mentioned, there are commuters who come and work on this island. And it's not just islanders who have to pay. So thank you for recognizing that. And Sound Transit, I'd like to give you some encouragement. I know that it doesn't take five 7 years to build a parking garage. And -- but I also know you're trying to do some other things on that site. And so I hope that Sound Transit will find a way to expedite the construction of the south Bellevue park-and-ride.

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Because I'm introducing myself now in public meetings. (Inaudible) for Mercer Island, the future home of the south Bellevue park-and-ride. Because we recognize that this is the closest station to Seattle and it's very convenient for people that come here because they can take a very short, very predictable bus ride. That's what transit users are looking for. And so I'd also encourage Sound Transit to, as they've already done, looking at options to increase the availability of bus service to other park-and-rides to make them more convenient. And I see you're going to add service to the 554. And finally, I'm going to speak to our community leaders here on Mercer Island. Thank you for your leadership and your dedication to preserving the quality of life here. And as you work with Sound Transit and we think about mitigation commitments, when I see traffic signals, I don't see that as consistent with 21st Century way of looking at it for all of our users and our roadway system. I'd like to see (inaudible). I'd like to see us take an approach that takes the thoroughfare aspect out of Town Center and makes it a welcoming place for pedestrians and bicyclists and all users. And so once again, I'd like to encourage us all to work together and for the good of Mercer Island and the region on which we depend. And I think this region also depends on us to a certain degree. Because if we sank into Lake Washington, there'd be no way to get over there. So thank you, all, for being here. Have a good evening.

- Thanks. Paul Manner. My wife and I moved here in 2006, and we love it here. We're up on the north (inaudible). So when I heard (inaudible) was coming to Mercer Island, I thought, Yeah, that's great. Hey, a choo-choo. I mean, who doesn't like trains? Trains are great. And then I look at it a little bit, and I said, Well, you know, okay, when was the first subway train built? And the answer is 1863. So just to sort of take us back a few years in 1863, ten percent of the people in this country were slaves. The first lightbulb was not going to be invented for 15 years. And the first telephone wasn't going to be invented for 13. So I said, Well, okay, you know, it's tried and true. And I said, well, how much is it going to cost? And the answer is, it's going to cost \$200 million per mile for Sound Transit. That's what it costs now. That's what the North-South Link has cost. It's not going to get cheaper. And then I said, Well, you know, okay, fair enough. It's going to cost a lot. But a lot of people are going to use this. So how many people actually use light rail? So I looked around, and I found San Jose, which is the biggest user of light rail in the country. About seven percent of the people in San Jose use light rail. Well, this doesn't sound very good. So, you know, I'm thinking to myself, Self, it's a good five miles across the I-90 corridor. It's a billion dollars. For that money, you could pretty much buy everybody a Prius and just give him the keys to the damn car. And then I thought to myself, Well, what happens to people that don't have a Prius? And what happens to people that don't have cars? And the answer is, they take busses. Well, what happens with light rail? A couple things. First of all, it costs so much that every other form of transit gets taken out of the equation. That's not a big deal for me. I have a nice car. I can drive anywhere I want. What about the poor people? What about people that depend on bus to get to work, to get to school, to shop? Well, they're pretty much out of luck. And why? So that we can ride a little choo-choo train up and down the I-5 corridor or the I-90 corridor or the I-5 corridor for maybe a couple times a year. The point is, light rail doesn't make sense. We're five years away from having autonomous vehicles that can do this themselves instead of using technology that's 150 years old. Why don't we look ahead for once, look at something that's viable economically, that people are actually going to use, and that is a -- that is a step forward instead of a step back 150 years. My point is, you have an opportunity here, before you've laid all the track here, to actually do something that's forward-thinking, that puts Seattle on the map as being a forward-thinking city as opposed to a retro city. And it also makes sense economically. So my take on this is, again, is before you start laying

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down track, think about what you're doing. Think about what you're doing to the community. Thanks.

- My name is Bonnie Godfred. I've lived on Mercer Island five or six years. When we decided to move to the Seattle area, we surveyed the whole area to look at what would meet our needs and we settled on Mercer Island. It's a small town with all the amenities of a big city, very close by. The proximity to the airport was important to us. Obviously our kids are grown, so schools weren't such an issue. But traffic certainly was. And that's one of the reasons we're not in Edmonds, for example. My concerns are that I don't think we're going to -- oh, your turn. I don't think we're going to get this stopped. The train has left the station, in spite of what Paul says. It doesn't sound like a very good idea, but I guess it's probably too late. But what I cannot understand is how you can possibly advocate for a light rail without parking. Oh, I know, you have busses. And then let me tell you what happened with the busses. I live on the north end of Mercer Island, so I've never been dependent on the busses. But I have a good friend who lives in Seward Park. She would get on the bus, ride to the light-rail station, go downtown Seattle to her job. Whoops. The busses were taken away. So she drives to the light-rail station. No parking. So she takes her car from home, drives to Seattle, and pays to park, to work. And that's what happened to Mercer Island. How could you put a light-rail station here without parking? Oh, you don't need parking if you have busses. So I just don't get the equation. My second concern is the safety of I-90. I was telling one of the WSDOT guys, I think. 3:00 today, I was driving east on I-90. There was a fire truck with sirens and flashing lights. The roadway was jammed with cars. And he couldn't get through until people were able to pull over into the very small shoulder that is going to become smaller. On the other side of the freeway -- and now I understand why -- there were fire trucks, there were aid cars streaming west, probably to the Aurora Bridge disaster. And the same issue. Too many cars. No place for the cars to pull over. So I'm very concerned with the reduced lanes and the reduced -- the width of the lanes, the reduced shoulders. There are lots of trucks, as an earlier person said. They are very big. And last, but not least, my concern is congestion on Mercer Island, both from the bus station, as I prefer to call it, and also from the redirection of the cars on and off of I-90. I live on the north end. I'm going to have to drive to -- where I never go, Island Crest, just to get on the lanes.
- My name is Ira Appelman. I'm a 52-year resident of Mercer Island. I'm an island product. I'm the top male of the class of '69 of Mercer Island High School, the top academic man. I graduated from the best graduate program, Stanford University. I have a Ph.D. I say that to let you know that I don't need any help from the government to understand what has happened. I have been to every council meeting except one in 18.5 years. I started in 1997. And I was at the Sound Transit meetings that met on -- on the I-90 issues. And when their equipment failed, they asked for my recording. And I gave them a recording so they could write the minutes. So I know what's happened at the City, and I think I have the academic, the intellectual capability to understand. In 1976, the memorandum agreement was a fight. It was a fight to the finish of -- the agreement was actually signed in the end of December of 1976. My understanding was that the governor said -- and I wasn't involved at this time -- the governor said that, if you guys don't make the decision, we're going to refuse the money. So it went to the end. It was a fight. And that's how we got access to the center lanes for SOV. My biggest problem with what we have now is we have a terrible leadership at the council. And nobody likes to say that. It's always, Oh, thank you so much for your service. Well, I'm not thanking them for their service. They've given everything away. And -- and they are hopeless, and I think they need to be put in the recycling bin. The

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mayor, at a recent meeting, said that when he was in California, looking for a place here, he chose Mercer Island. And what he heard from off-islanders is that we were snobs. And his goal is to make off-islanders think that we're not snobs. And so when we lost our bus routes, there wasn't a peep from the council. Nothing. We lost our bus routes. We got a silly shuttle. And there wasn't a peep, except of course Mike Cero said something, but the council didn't fight for us. There are three issues associated with I-90. One is the park-and-ride. In 2000, I told the council that they need to fight for Mercer Island parking spaces. They would not do it. They caved. The plan was to have the new parking south of I-90 and then we would get our park-and-ride. But the council caved. And I told them, if they'd been here in 1976, we wouldn't have gotten SOV access. The second issue is access to HOV. The poison pill that nobody talks about: Now there are two lanes. We're going to be put into one lane, even if we get HOV access. The original agreement is that it goes below something like 40 miles per hour -- yeah, okay. If it goes below 40 miles per hour, we're going to get eliminated. Yes, there's only one lane. It's going to go. And we're going to be eliminated from the one lane.

- I'm Denise Thomas. I've lived here on Mercer Island for 14 years. And I have two children, one in middle school and one at Lakeridge Elementary. I'm active here in the community through the schools. I'm a substitute, members of the PTA. I volunteer. Excuse me. And much more. I'm actually here to speak specifically about a concern that the traffic will negatively impact the quality of education here on Mercer Island, which is one of the major draws for families to live here on Mercer Island. The number of teachers in the Mercer Island schools that actually live here on the island is now currently in the single digits, down from nearly 40 percent just ten years ago when I was teaching at West Mercer Elementary. This means that the overwhelming majority of teachers, administrators, and support staff need to use I-90 to commute to their place of work here on the island and to educate our children. Increased tolls and decreased access to and from Mercer Island will make it harder for us to attract, and most importantly, retain teachers in our classrooms. They'll have to spend more time on an already busy commute, and more expensive -- I'm sorry -- traffic is already bad, and I'm afraid obviously it's going to get worse for people in single-occupant vehicles. I urge the council to negotiate fiercely for what's best for our unique geography here on Mercer Island, and to do so productively, finding win-win opportunities for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs. Two of the specific things I think that are imperative for the people commuting to the island -- (inaudible) our educators -- would be permanent access to the I-90 HOV lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to and from Seattle; and I-405, a sufficiently decrease access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving. And (inaudible) already a problem is the immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups. Thank you.
- I'm going to steal some of Denise's thunder. So I apologize if this is redundant. I grew up on Mercer Island. My husband and I are raising two boys here. Mobility is essential to my family and our community in so many ways. I wrote all this down, so forgive me for not looking up as I speak. I want to make sure I capture what I've written. My husband's an orthopedic surgeon at Orthopedic Physician Associates. He practices on First Hill in Seattle and at Swedish in Issaquah. And, in fact, today he received a phone call for his clinic to be on alert because of the mass casualty due to the accident on the Aurora Bridge. Now, if that had happened in the evening or if it had happened when he was home, we would have maybe had some challenges, given our mobility challenges for him to get there. So for him and his job of working to sometimes help

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save lives – although we might argue that orthopedic surgeons don't necessarily save lives, they do work to put people back together – it is important for him to be able to get on and off the island easily at really odd hours of day and in the evening. I'm a former executive with Merrill Lynch, and I've spent time running my own small business for the past year. This requires me to get around in the region effectively to see my clients. In my spare time, I'm very active in schools. I also run the school advisory council for our principal. I've been the past PTA president, and I've been on several district committees, including the boundary committee and most recently (inaudible) new school. Transportation mobility is important for all these reasons, for my family and for other families. But perhaps the reason I'm most passionate about is our schools. My father was a principal on Mercer Island for over 30 years and has been involved in education for almost 40. He always told me that Mercer Island schools were great because of the teachers he could recruit, he could train, and that he could retain. So it's easy to recruit. It's easy to train. It's harder to retain when we're challenged getting people on and off the island. That job is harder than it used to be. And I'm worried that traffic will negatively impact the quality education on Mercer Island. We moved here for our schools. We pay taxes for our schools. This is a very important issue to our families here. And not just families that have children in school. People who have retired, who care about their home values. The number of teachers, as Denise mentioned, has greatly decreased -- the number of teachers that live on Mercer Island has greatly decreased from 40 percent to now under 10 percent. How are these teachers going to get on and off the island if we increase tolls? Increased tolls and decreased access to and from Mercer Island make us -- make it harder for us to attract and keep these high-quality teachers in our classrooms, teaching our children. Traffic is already bad, and I am convinced it's going to get worse. Again, we urge the council to negotiate fiercely for what is best for our geography on Mercer Island, and do it productively to find a win-win opportunity for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs. Thank you.

- My name is Dwight Schaeffer. I'm a retired engineer and manager. And I've lived on the island for about 30 years. Short time ago, the legislature adopted a new goal for the transportation projects. That was to reduce congestion. As I look at this proposal to run light rail across Lake Washington, it looks like it increases congestion. First of all, the center roadway that was originally designed to increase the number of lanes from eight to ten for auto traffic and the center road would be -- it shared with busses, that's no more. Worse than that, it's going to be 14 years of construction, and that is going to make congestion across I-90 even worse. We've already accounted congestion due to 520 tolling. It's almost impossible to get to the freeway on 405 early in the morning or back late at night. So what do we do? We take Bellevue Way. Bellevue Way will be torn up for five years, and then they will reduce the number of lanes from four to two. The cut-through traffic increases congestion on Mercer Island. The -- the bus intercept increases traffic on Mercer Island. I think it's -- I know everybody keeps saying it's too late to change anything. Well, they said that about tolling too: Don't fight the tolling because it's too late to change it. I think that the money to go will exceed what it would take to put light rail down 405 to Bellevue on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe route, and it'll do far more than reduce congestion. At the very least, it's a break-even proposition for a huge amount of money across Lake Washington. There should be enough money left over to build parking garages at East Lake -- Eastgate and Southeast Eighth, which was considered earlier and proposed by the City of Bellevue. And probably have enough left over to build the southeast Bellevue park-and-ride also. This has got to be the most expensive place to run a light rail across. Thank you.

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- Okay. Thanks. I just want to -- Ira Appelman. I just wanted to emphasize that our biggest problem is the leadership problem. In 1976 -- and I'll get to my third point. In 1976, Aubrey Davis and the others, Ben Werner, were not nice. They did not say, Oh, well, we need to all come together; we need a win-win solution. They actually negotiated for Mercer Island. Seattle negotiated for Seattle, Bellevue for Bellevue. All the players, the regional players that we're dealing with, are negotiating for their constituents. We need people who negotiate for our constituents. In the end, there's going to be a deal, fine. Nothing wrong with making a deal at the end. But we need tough negotiators now. My third point was tolling. The council was extremely weak on tolling. In February of 2013, in this very room, where I'm standing, they brought back the former mayors, Aubrey Davis, Judy Clibborn, who's trying to get to it -- she's in the legislature -- Fred Jarrett, Alan Merkle, Elliott Newman. They all said we had to be tolled. What changed? What changed happened in this very room. 800 islanders showed up in this very room. I was part of no tolling. It was led by Lisa Belden and Eva Zemplenyi. I was part of that group. We got a bunch of people here, 800 people. They said, No way, we're not going to have tolling. And that changed everything. Now, our council members went to Judy Clibborn. I testified too at the legislature. They testified in favor of tolling. And you can see it on the Internet. Mayor Bassett, Deputy Mayor Grausz, and Council Member Bertlin testified in favor. They want to mitigate tolling. Maybe it would be tolled in one direction. Council Member Cero was the only one who said no tolling, no way. I testified against tolling there too. Weak leadership is what's created our problems. It's created the problem at the -- that we don't have parking at the park-and-ride. We don't have it because we have weak leadership. Sound Transit wanted to increase parking in the corridor. That was their goal. Our goal was to have parking for our people. We just went along with their goal, and we didn't get our goal. And Sound Transit at the time, their people, when I was at these meetings, they said, We could quadruple the size and it'd still be full. And our guys dropped the ball, as they're dropping the ball now. And the only reason that we're having meetings like this is because islanders stood up and said, No way, we want somebody to advocate for us. And so that's the most important thing. You need to make sure -- and I think we need to get rid of the current council. We need a council that's going to fight for us, and when they say we need a win-win situation, get rid of those guys. We need somebody who's negotiating for us, and then there will be -- eventually there'll be a deal.
- Hello. Good evening. My name is Jenni Mechem, and I have lived on Mercer Island for about 11 years. But I love to trot out this claim. My uncle grew up here and was born here in 1918. He swam across the channel to Bellevue. I wanted to say three things. The first thing is, a little bit of a look back in history. This conversation that we are having now would have been a very different conversation if the 520 bridge had not been built in such a way that light rail could not be put on it. Too late to change that now, but I just want people to remember that we need to look far in the future and far back when we're thinking about these things. The second thing is, light rail is going to happen. It has been planned. It has been studied. It's going to happen. And as islanders, our strategy should not be to oppose it. Our strategy should be to maximize the benefit that we can gain in terms of additional parking, in terms of compensation for the loss of mobility. And that is a far more productive strategy. I see most of the people who I might direct this message at have probably left, but I just think that that would be a far more effective strategy for going forward. Thank you.

Letters

Heather and Darren Schwartz
4227 Shoreclub Dr.
Mercer Island, WA 98040

September 24, 2015

Darren and I have lived on Mercer Island for 7 years. We urge our leaders to become fully educated about Islanders' transportation concerns, the complex issues impacting our mobility, and the importance of working quickly and strenuously for solutions benefiting Mercer Island.

My husband and I are both doctors. We chose to live on Mercer Island because it is a wonderful place to live, but as doctors often on call, our patients and professional healthcare colleagues depend on our ability to quickly get to a hospital to help patients, tend to the sick, and even save lives. My husband works in Tacoma/Gig Harbor and I work at NWH (Northgate), which makes Mercer Island a very central location, but we are dependent on access to both I-5 north and I-5 South. While I understand the desire to build a healthy transportation system around the region, it cannot come at the expense patients in need. I-90 construction closures, reduced access to the freeway ramp, and the increased number of cars on our town's roads because of construction will all make it harder for us to get to those patients in need as soon as possible. Traffic is already bad, and I'm afraid it's only going to get worse.

I support the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated to decide on issues that will dramatically impact our mobility and the success of regional transit investments. Specifically:

- Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving
- Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island
- Sufficient, Mercer Island dedicated parking capacity at the Park & Ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian and bike access from all over the Island
- Immediate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters, then when Light Rail opens, minimized bus congestion on Mercer Island streets and the East Channel Bridge
- Immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups
- I-90 construction closures isolated to late nights to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters over contractor convenience

I urge the Council to negotiate fiercely for what is best for the unique geography of Mercer Island and to do so productively, finding win-win opportunities for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs.

Thank you for your time and interest in this important topic.

Sincerely,

Heather Kramm Schwartz and Darren E Schwartz
Heather Kramm Schwartz & Darren Schwartz

9/24

Sept. 23, 2015

To Sound Transit Board members,

Our family has lived on Mercer Island for eleven years and during that time, I have been an almost-daily bus commuter into downtown Seattle. In the past several years, I have found it uncomfortably crowded on the buses (if you can even get on the bus) both going into and coming home from work, and it has become nearly impossible to find a parking spot in the Mercer Island Park & Ride after 7:30am, Monday through Thursday.

While we are not able to attend the Sept. 24th public hearing due to curriculum night at school, we feel strongly enough about the transportation mess on Mercer Island that we hope you consider our input as well on the variety of transportation issues you are now considering.

We feel residents of Mercer Island should have dedicated parking spots at our local Park & Ride as well as in our town center. Until light rail comes online, I would like to see more buses on heavily used routes such as the ST 550.

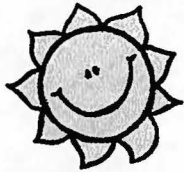
However, my gravest concern of all relates to the Bus Intercept Proposal. To use our Island as the depository for cars and buses as riders catch light rail into Seattle is a ludicrous idea on several levels. For one, the additional buses, whether moving or idling would be highly detrimental to our Island's downtown. Traffic congestion would make downtown unattractive and non-negotiable for local residents. Most of all the logic of the plan is flawed in that commuters from the Eastside are going to be less inclined to take buses and then transfer to light rail, rather they will simply drive here and park adding to our already frustrating parking situation. We are upset that in your current plan, Sound Transit has even done away with the greenery and nice pedestrian path that connects downtown near Tully's to the Park & Ride. It would be a highly attractive scenario for Eastside residents to use our city as a staging ground, but it would be horrible for our community.

Lastly, with my wife's part-time work and multiple children's activities in Seattle and Bellevue, we also believe it important to our family's mobility to retain access to I-90HOV/HOT lanes between Seattle and I-405. Residents of the Island have no option but to drive on I-90 so we should be exempt from congestion pricing in the form of tolls.

We are supporting local leaders who understand the complexity, severity and permanent consequences of these decisions. We thank you in advance for listening and using better judgement before the Island's quality of life is ruined, as you know, it's irrevocable.

Sincerely,

David and Hilary Benson



Sunnybeam School

8635 SE 68th Street, Mercer Island, WA

sunnybeamschool.org

206.232.5776 | sunnybeamschool@yahoo.com

September 24, 2015

Sunnybeam School is a beloved and long-standing education tradition on Mercer Island. Sunnybeam operates in the historic Lakeview School building, which was built in 1918 to house eight grades of Mercer Island students. In 1957, the schoolhouse was turned into a preschool and has served multiple generations of Mercer Island children — providing a nurturing environment for learning through active play. In 1988, the building was entered on the National Register of Historic Places.

Our school is operated by a volunteer Board of Directors, which is, among other functions, responsible for the hiring and retention of the teaching staff. Currently, we have three full-time teachers, all of whom commute from off-island locations, as well as three part-time teachers. We recently went through a multiple-month teacher recruitment process, and found one of the main obstacles to attracting quality teaching talent was longer commutes due to regional traffic delays.

Sunnybeam School is located on the south end of Mercer Island, which is several miles from the Town Center and proposed transit station. While Sunnybeam does not have a position on the specific proposed transit improvements affecting Mercer Island, we do know that for transit to be a viable option, our teachers need frequent connector service all over Mercer Island — not just to the Town Center. Our teachers do not work standard 9-5 hours, so without all-day connector service, transit would not be a viable option for our teachers traveling from off island. Sunnybeam's Board of Directors urges Sound Transit to work with its regional transit partners to provide funding in perpetuity for the operation of frequent and reliable connector service to the southern part of Mercer Island throughout the day.

Sunnybeam School's Board of Directors supports the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated on issues that will dramatically impact the mobility of Mercer Island residents and employees, as well as the success of regional transit investments.

Thank you for considering our concerns on this important topic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia Hokanson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Julia Hokanson

President, Sunnybeam Board of Directors 2015-16

Janelle Honeycutt
8636 SE 75th Place
Mercer Island, WA 98040

September 24, 2015

Dear Mercer Island City Council Member:

I am writing to you as a parent of an elementary student at Lakeridge Elementary and am concerned about the impacts that proposed transportation investments will have on Mercer Island and specifically how it will impact the quality of education.

The majority of Mercer Island teachers do not live on Mercer Island, which means they need to use I-90 to commute to work each day. Decreased access to and from Mercer Island will make it more difficult to attract and retain high quality teachers as commute times increase.

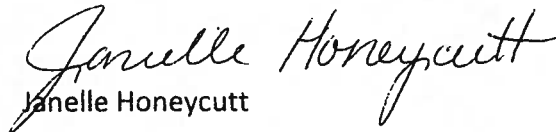
Our students also use I-90 to attend extra-curricular activities and athletics around the Greater Seattle area. Again, decreased access to and from Mercer Island could reduce the number of extra-curricular opportunities available to our students due to longer commute times that no longer fit already busy schedules.

I support the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated on the issues that will impact mobility and the success of regional transit investments.

I urge the Council to negotiate the transportation needs of Mercer Island while meeting the region's transportation needs. Specifically, Mercer Island needs:

- Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to and from Seattle and I-405 with sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving
- Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island
- Sufficient, Mercer Island dedicated parking capacity at the Park & Ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian and bike access across the entire Island
- Adequate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters; when Light Rail opens, minimize bus congestion on Mercer Island streets and the East Channel Bridge
- Immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups
- I-90 construction closures isolated to late nights to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters rather than contractor convenience

Thank you for your time and interest in this important topic.


Janelle Honeycutt



September 8, 2015

I am Judy Neuman, CEO of the Stroum Jewish Community Center on Mercer Island. We have been paying close attention to transportation issues facing our Island and I wanted to share how critical mobility is for the JCC, our employees and our members and guests.

Our 250 year-round employees, which grow to 400 seasonally, serve more than 15,000 people every year, including 195 children for preschool, close to 1000 summer day campers and over 500 seniors, plus any more members and guests. Our employees and members commute to the J from all over the metro area via cars, carpools and buses. I-90 traffic is so bad it's impacting our business. Last month a promising young teacher reluctantly backed out of accepting a job after a test run of her commute. I fear for the safety of our employees who walk over 30 minutes each way in the dark to and from the Park & Ride, since the bus route on 36th was closed quite some time ago. I watch every day as preschoolers wait in our classrooms for road-weary parents delayed by traffic both on I-90 and in our Town Center.

While Light Rail will certainly help some, the resulting increase in car traffic will hurt others. These are big, complicated issues that will have a dramatic impact on our business. It is critically important that everyone be educated on the changes and ramifications to make sure Mercer Island benefits from this massive investment.

Specifically:

- Mercer Island traffic to and from Seattle and I-405 should have permanent access to the new HOV lanes
- Mercer Island traffic should be permanently exempt from any tolls or congestion pricing
- We need better ways to get commuters to and from the Park & Ride
- The Park & Ride should be limited to Island residents and even more parking is needed
- We need more bus capacity to and from Seattle immediately- the majority of my employees live off-island.
- I-90 cut-through traffic ties up our roads and needs to be stopped
- The proposed bus intercept should be located elsewhere as it will snarl traffic and overload our already crowded transit stop
- We cannot lose HOV access ramp capacity
- I-90 construction closures should be limited to late nights instead of entire weekend

I urge the council to negotiate fiercely for what is best for Mercer Island and to do so productively, finding win-win opportunities for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs. The JCC depends on both.

Thank you for your time and interest in this important topic,

Judy Neuman
SJCC CEO

MERCER ISLAND CAMPUS
3801 EAST MERCER WAY
MERCER ISLAND WA 98040
206-232-7115

SEATTLE CAMPUS
2618 NE 80TH STREET
SEATTLE WA 98115
206-526-8073

www.SJCC.org

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Judy Neuman
Chief Executive Officer

9/24

To Whom It May Concern:

Our family has lived on Mercer Island for over 10 years. I urge our leaders to become fully educated about Islanders' transportation concerns, the complex issues impacting our mobility, and the importance of working quickly and smartly for solutions benefiting Mercer Island.

We chose to live on Mercer Island because we are both working professionals. My wife commutes to Redmond while I commute to Seattle. Mercer Island provides us a middle ground – a great small town in which to raise our family with a high quality of life. But with the proposed Sound Transit changes one or both of us will be greatly impacted by increased traffic, which as far as we can tell has already started with the tolling of 520. We are concerned about the impact additional changes such as the loss of the HOV lane will have on our quality of life and in particular our ability to spend time with our family. With both members of our household working, the commute is a major factor in all of our decisions – and negative changes will impact us significantly.

I support the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated – which will help drive smart solutions on issues that will dramatically impact our mobility and the success of regional transit investments. In my view, there are several issues that need immediate attention:

- Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving
- Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island
- Sufficient, Mercer Island dedicated parking capacity at the Park & Ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian and bike access from all over the Island
- Immediate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters; and when Light Rail opens, minimized bus congestion on Mercer Island streets and the East Channel Bridge
- Immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups
- I-90 construction closures limited to late nights to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters over contractor convenience

We urge the Council to negotiate fiercely for what is best for the unique geography of Mercer Island and to do so productively, finding win-win opportunities for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs.

Thank you for your time and interest in this important topic.



Paul and Michelle Stamnes



Mercer Island, WA 98040



Ecole Franco-Américaine du Puget Sound
 3795 E. Mercer Way
 Mercer Island, WA 98040
 206 275-3533
 Fax 206 812-0231

I am Eric Thuau of the French American School of the Puget Sound (FASPS). We have been paying close attention to transportation issues facing the Island and I wanted to share how critical mobility is for FASPS, our students' families, and our employees.

We have 425 students and 80 employees. Our student body comes primarily from Seattle, Bellevue, and Mercer Island, but originates in 50 different countries with over 35 languages spoken.

Our families and employees drive to FASPS via cars, carpools, and buses. I-90 traffic is bad and it is getting worse. I fear for the safety of our employees who walk over 30 minutes each way in the dark to and from the Park & Ride, since the bus route on 36th was closed quite some time ago. Many times our students wait for their parents who are delayed by traffic both on I-90 and in our Town Center.

I support the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated to decide on issues that will dramatically impact our mobility and the success of regional transit investments. Specifically, I am strongly in favor of the following measures to address the transportation needs of Islanders:

- Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving
- Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island
- Sufficient Mercer Island-dedicated parking capacity at the Park & Ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian, and bike access from all over the Island
- Immediate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters, then when Light Rail opens, minimized bus congestion on Mercer Island streets and the East Channel Bridge
- Immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups
- I-90 construction closures isolated to late nights to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters over contractor convenience

I urge the Council to negotiate fiercely for what is best for the unique geography of Mercer Island and to do so productively, finding win-win opportunities for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs.

Thank you for your time and interest in this important topic.

Eric Thuau
 Head of School

John and Molly Otter
4342 East Mercer Way
Mercer Island, WA 98040

John and I have lived on Mercer Island for 15 years. I urge our leaders to become fully educated about Islanders' transportation concerns, the complex issues impacting our mobility, and the importance of working quickly and strenuously for solutions benefiting Mercer Island.

John and I chose to live on Mercer Island because we are both working professionals. John commutes to Bellevue while I commute to Seattle and Mercer Island provides us a middle ground on which to raise our young family with a high quality of life. But with the proposed Sound Transit changes one or both of us will be greatly impacted by increased traffic, which as far as we can tell has already started with the tolling of 520. We are concerned about the impact additional changes such as the loss of the HOV lane will have on our quality of life and in particular our ability to spend time with our family. With both members of the household working, the commute is a major factor in all of our decisions and any change to negatively would have a lastly impact on us.

I support the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated to decide on issues that will dramatically impact our mobility and the success of regional transit investments. Specifically:

- Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving
- Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island
- Sufficient, Mercer Island dedicated parking capacity at the Park & Ride and Town Center, with convenient shuttle, pedestrian and bike access from all over the Island
- Immediate availability of bus seats to Seattle for Mercer Island commuters, then when Light Rail opens, minimized bus congestion on Mercer Island streets and the East Channel Bridge
- Immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups
- I-90 construction closures isolated to late nights to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters over contractor convenience

I urge the Council to negotiate fiercely for what is best for the unique geography of Mercer Island and to do so productively, finding win-win opportunities for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs.

Thank you for your time and interest in this important topic.

Molly and John Otter



My name is Matt King. I grew up on Mercer Island, raised my kids here and I am the President of King Construction, a second generation, Mercer Island based homebuilder. I urge our leaders to become fully educated about Islanders' transportation concerns, the complex issues impacting our mobility, and the importance of working quickly and strenuously for solutions benefiting Mercer Island.

Mobility on, off and around the Island is critical for our business and our customers. We have employees and subcontractors that drive here from all over at all different times. Time is money. Mobility also has a huge impact on home values. Any loss of mobility for Islanders will drive down home values and our business will suffer.

I support the efforts of Vision Mercer Island to ensure everyone is fully educated to decide on issues that will dramatically impact our mobility and the success of regional transit investments. Specifically:

- Permanent access to I-90 HOV/HOT lanes for all Mercer Island traffic to or from Seattle and I-405 and sufficient direct access ramp capacity to minimize lane weaving
- Permanent exemption of Mercer Island traffic from tolls and congestion pricing on our only route on and off the Island
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- Immediate reduction of I-90 cut-through traffic that clogs local streets and ramps and increases merging, worsening highway backups
- I-90 construction closures isolated to late nights to prioritize the needs of all I-90 commuters over contractor convenience

I urge the Council to negotiate fiercely for what is best for the unique geography of Mercer Island and to do so productively, finding win-win opportunities for the people of Mercer Island and the region's transportation needs.

Thank you for your time and interest in this important topic.

MATT KING
Mercer Island