

6/9/2022 System Expansion Committee
Meeting Written Public Comment
Submissions

Submissions

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Tija Petrovich

Dear Sound Transit board members,

I write today as a long term resident of Pioneer Square adding my support and addressing my concerns of the WSBLE project. I have lived in Pioneer Square for 30 years and I chair the Pioneer Square Residents' Council.

The WSBLE project has the potential to connect regional communities like Renton, Auburn and Everett to job hubs, event centers, and neighborhoods within Seattle, and to the regional light rail system. This is something I never thought I would see in my lifetime and such needed connections for our region.

But, the DEIS is inadequate.

I feel that Sound Transit has not adequately analyzed or mitigated the impacts to the historically marginalized CID community. Without a more thorough analysis of the impacts and approaches to mitigation, the process risks perpetuating the injustices this diverse neighborhood has experienced for generations. I know the equity language is there. I have seen and attended many meetings. Now, we need to experience the equity language in action.

We need an analysis to happen. How will we prevent damage to the district? How do we do more than just have the language and the talk? How do we act and prevent? How do you create the plan and adjust the plan without analysis?

-We INVOLVE the community and take more time to thoughtfully evaluate all options and find solutions that minimize harm. (Actual physical involvement beyond all the zooms we all attended)

-We can minimize harmful impacts thru design refinements and by developing mitigation plans.

-We can look at construction approaches and sequencing to reduce extensive, multi-year and overlapping street and transit disruptions in both the C/ID and Pioneer Square.

Again, this is an equity issue and Sound Transit has the opportunity to do the right thing. We can both serve the whole region AND all of the unique communities that lie within it.

Let's look at 4th again. We could CREATE A FRESH APPROACH to the 4th avenue shallow that minimizes the construction footprint, reduces costs

and impacts to the surrounding communities and still have a winning solution for the whole region. The 4th shallow alternative better serves Sounders commuters, neighborhood and stadium visitors, and avoids the harmful impacts that would result from 5th avenue alternatives. The 4th approach would tie Pioneer Square and the C/ID together without interrupting C/ID businesses. As a Pioneer Square resident, we have worked for years to find a way to tie our communities together. The 4th shallow option would accomplish this long term goal and difficult task.

Lastly, I encourage you NOT to wait until the final EIS is published to share what you have learned from design refinement work. The community needs to be involved to develop mitigation and community development agreements ahead of time. Sound Transit can involve, ahead of time, to answer all outstanding questions. As a board, you can direct staff to involve the community in problem solving and design changes during the months leading up to the final EIS. You can ask for regular reports to your board on outcomes of involvement.

I appreciate the opportunity to write to you. I hope to engage with you. I thank you for your time.

Tija

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Tija (Tia) Petrovich

Darcell Slovek-Walker, CEO of Transitional Resources

Dear Sound Transit Board Members,

I am commenting on the Sound Transit's West Seattle Link Extension proposals; I am the CEO of Transitional Resources (TR), a public community behavioral health and housing agency with buildings along two of the proposed alternative routes. We are deeply concerned about the impact of route DEL-6 and the refinement route for DEL-6 currently under discussion.

Transitional Resources is located in West Seattle on SW Avalon Way, with our primary offices, two supportive housing buildings, and our Assisted Living Facility all located right next door to each other along this street. We also own and rent other housing in the neighborhood, including a new building called Rise, a 44 unit apartment building on SW Yancy Street that is a short walk around the corner from our offices. Every person we serve lives with serious mental illnesses or a co-occurring substance use disorder. Most of our clients are formerly homeless, and all are extremely low income and are on Medicaid or other public assistance programs. Despite cycling through hospitalization and homelessness for years, the vast majority of our clients have been able to find stability through our services. If the DEL-6 option were to be chosen, the consequences to our program and services would be dire.

Both the DEL-6 and the refinement option will impact us in the following ways:

- Publicly funded housing that serves BIPOC and low income individuals will be destroyed.
- The high needs community of people we serve will all lose critical services that are on their doorstep.
- Up to 31 high needs individuals will be displaced; a further 122 per month will be without the important access to services they need to treat their acute, long-term mental illnesses.
- 48% of those we serve are from BIPOC communities, and disrupting service for this population would be a major setback to ensuring these individuals receive services and stability they need.
- Two publicly funded buildings and projects meant to service low income individuals living with serious mental illness will be removed.
- Our buildings have covenants on them for 40 - 75 years stating they need to be used for low income housing purposes. There are no clauses in this contract to void these covenants.
- The cost to relocate our services and/or the people we serve will be incredibly high as construction costs and land values have soared. The costly nature of replacing our buildings would likely cancel out any cost savings associated with DEL-6.
- Finding an adequate location for us to move to that keeps our community model of care intact would be extremely difficult.
- If our clients cannot find adequate services like the ones we provide, they will return to the hospitals or the streets, where addressing their needs will cost more than what it cost to keep them in TR's community where they do have safety, stability and access to services.

I know that like many in our larger community, you care about addressing homelessness, promoting affordable housing, and providing those who have mental illness access to the services they need. The DEL-6 options will displace populations Sound Transit has promised to keep intact and remove services and housing for high needs/high risk individuals, all in the middle of a major homelessness crisis in the city. In no uncertain terms, it is likely that many of our clients would be unable to find new, permanent housing and accessible treatment for their mental illness. This means they would cycle through hospitalizations and/or homelessness all over again, causing additional and unnecessary burdens to the system.

Losing a community resource like TR would not only be counter to the efforts put forth to address the homelessness crisis, but it would disrupt services for people who need them most and render our model of care we have built over 45 years almost inoperable. I ask that you do not pursue DEL-6 and instead invest time and effort to other routes that will be more beneficial to the community. We strongly agree with the Avalon Neighborhood Association that the DEL-2a or DEL-2b and the WSJ-3a or WSJ-3b options would be the most effective options for our neighborhood and should be pursued.

Thank you,

Darcell Slovek-Walker

Chief Executive Officer

Transitional Resources

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*Catherine Stanford on behalf of the Building Owners and
Managers Association Seattle King County*

Dear Chair Balducci,

The Building Owners and Managers Association Seattle King County (BOMA) is an industry association representing the owners and managers of commercial real estate property. Our members own and manage the majority of the high-rise commercial buildings in the Seattle Downtown Core. Our members also own and manage commercial properties throughout King County. Our Industry Partner members are those companies that provide goods and services to the properties.

BOMA has long supported expanding transit throughout the Puget Sound region. Connecting our properties with tenants and clients is key to the health of the commercial real estate industry as the region continues to grow.

We have been an active participant in the WSBLE stakeholder group convened by the Greater Seattle Chamber and have had presentations by Sound Transit staff on the stations sitings that will most impact our buildings, service providers, customers, and tenants.

Please consider the emerging consensus on a preferred alternative for the West Seattle & Ballard link extensions. That consensus is reflected in the comments on the draft EIS you will hear about today as well as a resolution under consideration by the Seattle City Council.

Selecting a preferred alternative that appears to be the lowest cost option today but isn't the best project for the communities through which it goes, runs the risk of being the costliest by opening day of the new lines.

At BOMA, we are ready to work with you to ensure this project is a success.

Our comments on the DEIS were grouped into three categories:

Siting:

Take into consideration current pedestrian paths, as well as ingress and egress to buildings.

Put priority siting on proximity to high occupancy buildings where the Link will benefit from the most use.

Ensure all stops are universally accessible. Our industry has worked diligently to ensure broad accessibility to our buildings.

Include amenities for non-motorized connections.

Consider the potential of relieving the downtown surface streets of bus transit to alleviate traffic congestion and pollution.

There is no mitigation for the loss of on street parking either temporary or permanent. In light of the fact that the downtown area has seen a significant, incremental loss of parking over the past 10 years, this needs to be addressed.

Property Acquisition:

Consider type of property and value of current use.
Take a long-term view and consider potential for adaptive re-use or new development and how property would serve downtown.
There will be an impact on commercial real estate transactions and development planning as Sound Transit determines the properties for acquisition.

Construction:

Plan the construction to ensure the minimal impact possible; employ proven strategic construction practices.

Consider ingress and egress from parking garages, building entrances and street level retail tenants and provide more detail on how that will be managed.

How many spaces will be lost in garages and surface lots due to construction and acquisition; how will those losses be mitigated?

A Construction Access and Traffic Management Plan is anticipated in the DEIS, but there is no description of how it would be developed. What are the overarching goals and objectives for the project's construction and the approach to partner agency coordination?

The DEIS recognizes that the Downtown Segment would have the greatest potential for cumulative impacts, as it has the highest density of reasonably foreseeable future actions. However, any adverse impacts would be temporary. We do not believe that a multi-year impact is "temporary" In addition, stating that "construction is typically an indicator of economic growth, as it brings temporary and permanent jobs and revenue to local economies" seems dismissive of the real impact on businesses. We know from our recent experience with the pandemic that that many businesses will simply not survive. There must be a robust plan in place to support businesses well in advance of the start of construction.

What are the impacts of noise and vibration? Will there be vibration from the tunnel operation once it is completed?

Consider the impact of street closures on surrounding streets and mitigate that impact as much as possible.

There are many comments in the DEIS about the methods of communication, however, it is important to build relationships and work closely with building owners and managers to understand how the property functions prior to determining construction. Communicate in a timely manner.

With either alternative, there needs to be more study about the impacts

As noted in our stakeholder letter, we support the extension of light rail to West Seattle and Ballard and completion of the Sound Transit 3 program as promised to voters. We also believe the upcoming decision by the Sound Transit Board of Directors to confirm or modify the preferred alternative for the project is of great importance to the future of our city and region.

The construction phase is our biggest concern. If improperly managed, the risks to the economic health of downtown are high. Our industry provides significant revenue to the City of Seattle and King County, through property tax, REET, sales tax, parking tax, and other taxes and fees. An in depth and realistic study of the economic impact of the construction phase is essential to planning mitigation. There will be jobs created by the construction and that is good for our economy; however, there will also be job losses due to building and business closures that need to be taken into account.

Our owners and managers are prepared to work closely with the Sound Transit teams to educate them on how the buildings operate and we at BOMA are happy to facilitate that engagement.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments. We look forward to a productive project and a prosperous downtown for everyone in the region.

Submitted by Catherine Stanford, Contract Public Affairs Consultant for

BOMA Seattle King County. Rod Kauffman, President

CA Stanford Public Affairs

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[Frank Irigon](#)

Why we fight to preserve and protect the Chinatown-International District.

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Frank Irigon (he/him)

“On this battlefield man has no better weapon than his intelligence, no other force but his heart.” Jose Rizal

*Jared Jonson, Director of Property Operations – Seattle
Chinatown-International District Preservation & Development
Authority*

Hello,

I am writing to offer my comments to the Sound Transit Board System Expansion Committee meeting for June 9, 2022.

On behalf of the Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority (SCIDpda), we would like to share our perspective post-DEIS comment period and as the board moves forward with its decision making, that it keep in mind the following.

The CID is a unique and vibrant ethnic committee. It is a neighborhood critical to the region’s social and cultural fabric and a central station in the Sound Transit system. Our neighborhood has been disproportionately impacted by past infrastructure projects nearly every decade dating back to the construction of I-5. While we broadly support the WSBLE project, the DEIS is inadequate. There has not been adequate analysis or mitigation impacts identified. Without a more thorough analysis of the impacts and approaches to mitigation, the process risks perpetuating pat community harms.

Sound Transit needs to take more time to truly study impacts an mitigations. We encourage the agency to take more time to thoughtfully evaluate all options and engage the CID to find solutions the minimize harm to the neighborhood, its residents, businesses, and broader community. Questions we would like answers to include:

- How can the harmful impacts of the CID segment alternatives be minimized or avoided through design refinements and development of mitigation plans?
- How can other construction approaches or sequencing avoid or minimize the extensive, multiple year, and overlapping street and transit disruptions in the CID and Pioneer Square? What about in the Seattle Center, South Lake Union and Downtown neighborhoods?
- Can Sound Transit create a fresh approach to the 4th Avenue shallow alternative that minimizes the construction footprint, reduces the cost and minimizes or avoids impacts to the surrounding community?
- How will Sound Transit ensure that information is shared well in advance with the community to answer all outstanding questions by the end of the environmental review process?
- How will Sound Transit involve the community to develop mitigation, community development agreements, and construction management plans before the Final EIS is published?

Our neighborhood needs to be involved in refining the solution. Sound Transit should not wait for the Final EIS to be published to share with the community what they learn from design refinement work on the proposed alternatives, especially 4th avenue. The Board of Directors should direct staff to involve the community in problem solving and design changes during the months leading up to the Final EIS. The 4th Avenue shallow alignment is the least impactful to the neighborhood as currently laid out and we urge the Board of Directors and Agency take a thoughtful approach in considering it as such.

Kind Regards,

Jared Jonson
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Deb Barker

West Seattle resident Deb Barker speaking. I'm commenting on proposed alignments for the WSBLE. I served on the Sound Transit 3 Stakeholder Advisory Group (2018-2019) and the Sound Transit 3 Community Advisory Group (2021-2022).

I believe that DEL-5 and DEL-6 are distinctly flawed options that violate many key Sound Transit goals for the WSBLE. Sound Transit should not be in the business of shoving square pegs into round holes, which is the result of these alternatives. With DEL 5 and DEL 6, creating sustainable TOD is completely unrealistic as parcel assemblage is fractured and customers/residents absent. Transit access is dismal and existing roadway width woeful. Proposed refinements to allow this station area to function are outlandish contortions.

I urge the Sound Transit Board to reject DEL-5 and DEL-6.

I also urge the Sound transit Board to resolve a myriad of challenges (such maritime business elimination, heron nesting, and residential destruction) and reinstate the Purple Line.

Maria Barrientos

Interbay alignment & station location: Both the preferred and alternative alignment appears to run through the new Seattle Storm Practice Facility & would demolish the new structure. The retained cut

makes it even worse. We request Sound Transit strongly consider shifting the alignment & relocating the station so it does not demolish this new facility. A facility built by women, for women, serving an 80% BIPOC women's professional players group and underprivileged female youth.

Alternatives could include the VE option to consolidate the station south where there is more pedestrian access. There isn't much pedestrian traffic at 17th & Bertona.

Tiffany Jones

This comment was submitted after the meeting began.

Good afternoon.

I was unable to attend the meeting today 6/9/22, but would like to submit my comments for the record:

I am a neighbor in West Seattle and live in the Avalon/Delridge Neighborhood with my daughter and husband. My daughter and I are both Caucasian, and my husband is black. There are quite a few people of color living in our neighborhood, and it is a vibrant, connected, communal group that would be displaced if DEL6 becomes THE option for the system expansion. DEL6 would not only displace those in our neighborhood but would demolish the Alki Beach Academy, a day care for over 150 children.

I would like to urge you to consider a refinement to the Andover tunnel plan (different than the tunnel option considered earlier at the Level 1 Alternatives). While an Andover tunnel would be 0.4 miles longer, if a tunnel is to be built anyway, have you investigated if the cost of the extra ~half mile of tunnel would be more than acquiring the 20+ properties that would be required if DEL6 is put in place as is? Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tiffany Jones

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