

12/8/2022 System Expansion Committee
Meeting Written Public Comment
Submissions

Submissions

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Bill Hirt

The agenda for the Dec 8th Sound Transit System Expansion Committee Meeting includes the following:

6. Business Items

For committee final action:

B. Motion No. M2022-95: Recommending that the portions of the Proposed 2023 Budget and Transit Improvement Plan reviewed by the System Expansion Committee be forwarded by the Finance and Audit Committee to the Board with a do-pass recommendation.

The motion personifies a decade of a Sound Transit Board made up of “well minded” elected officials with no understanding of what constitutes effective public transit. That public transit should be used to provide transit for those who can’t drive or choose not to drive to destinations and to reduce congestion for those who do. That doing so requires providing those seeking to use transit with access to transit capacity to desired destinations.

Instead, the Sound Transit Board apparently perceives its job is to implement Prop 1 and ST3 “Voter approved extensions”. They’ve chosen to ignore the fact both voter approvals were the result of delusional extension ridership projections. That Sound Transit refuses to add parking to increase access to transit or acknowledge light rail spine extensions don’t increase transit capacity into the city. Thus, ridership added by extensions will only reduce access for current commuters.

The October 2021 Northgate Link debut exemplified those failures. Sound Transit’s website had projected the Link would add 41,000 to 49,000 riders by 2022. Prior to the debut, the Seattle Times Traffic had heralded the Link as “Transit Transformed” promising the Link’s three stations would add 42,000 to 49,000 riders.

Yet Sound Transit has yet to release the ridership added, no longer providing any quarterly service delivery performance reports. Ending reports for service provided, riders added at each light rail station, and riders added by each bus route. Each transit mode also had costs per boarder, and fare box recovery of those costs.

Instead, the result was reflected in Sound Transit’s 2022 budget prediction only 43,000 “Average Weekday Boardings” for the entire Link, less than the 48,600 predicted for 2021 budget, prior to Northgate debut. The extension added costs for the Link with \$14.92 cost per boarding a 30% increase over \$11.67, 2021 prediction. Both, presumably the result of Sound Transit’s recognition of the Link’s failure to provide commuters with increased access and transit capacity into Seattle.

Sound Transit’s October 2023 Budget fails to include any comparable “Link Budget Highlights”, “Service Provided, Boardings, Costs per Boarding, or Farebox Recovery. Thus, it’s unclear what their year-over-year predictions with Northgate Link. Yet, the budget’s Long Range Financial Plan, Ridership by Mode 2017—2046” chart still shows Link ridership increasing from 18 million in 2022 to 62 million in 2026. Presumably because of extensions to Lynnwood, Federal Way, and Redmond.

However, none of those extensions significantly increase parking for access, the number of transit vehicles per hour, or the capacity of those vehicles. Sound Transit plans to use light rail to replace bus routes into Seattle reduces transit capacity into the city. Sound Transit waits until 2032 for West Seattle and 2037 for Ballard extensions to add transit capacity into downtown.

The bottom line is the Sound Transit System Expansion Committee on Dec 8th will recommend approving the 2023 Financial Plan and Proposed Budget. A budget that reflects Sound Transit’s apparent goal to implement “voter approved” link extensions rather than reduce area’s congestion. A

budget that ignores the Northgate Link demonstration of the need for access and transit capacity. Another year and billions spent on extensions that increase operating costs, do nothing to reduce congestion into the city, and reduce access for current riders.

Denise Moriguchi

Sound Transit Expansion Committee Members,

Thank you for continuing to involve the community in discussion around the proposed WSBLE station locations in the Chinatown International District.

As a family-owned business and a long-time member of the CID community, we believe passionately that an ST3 station in our neighborhood can be designed to accomplish a set of shared goals we believe best serve our community's interests. Based on information available to date, we feel an improved 4th Ave. option has the best chance of delivering on the following objectives:

- Minimize construction impacts such as road closures, vehicle circulation and duration
- Create clearer and safer connectivity between the CID and Pioneer Square
- Eliminate pinch points
- Revitalize Union Station into a community gathering point
- Improve sense of safety with better lighting, clearer right of way and better maintained plazas
- Create a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood with wider sidewalks and crosswalks, improved plantings, pedestrian-scale lighting and better wayfinding

A strong 4th Ave station design could tie together the CID, Pioneer Square, South Downtown and the Stadium District into an integrated, vibrant and accessible community. Greater connectedness better serves Sounder commuters and other regional visitors with more efficient transfers and safer access.

Our community is eager to better understand Sound Transit's plan for reaching a final EIS in the coming months. We encourage you to be as transparent as possible about how revised plans have been improved since the DEIS and how the proposed options address the community's concerns, especially when it comes to avoiding irreparable harm to a community that has borne a disproportionate burden of past infrastructure projects.

We remain confident that we can find a solution that serves the CID and the entire region.

Sincerely,

Denise Moriguchi

President and CEO

Uwajimaya, Inc.

Comments submitted after the meeting

Brien Chow

The document referred to in this comment is attached below.

Hello System Expansion Committee Members,

Brien Chow here. I'm a co-founder of TEA and chair of the Chong Wa Benevolent Assn. Outreach/Advocacy Committee. I hope you've had a chance to look over some information I sent earlier on the community concept of a Park Lid next to 4th Avenue while light rail is being built. I replaced your staff's slide of a box on the LID and replaced it with a big, beautiful, bold park for Chinatown, Pioneer Square and SODO. Since today's agenda topic is the budget, please be sure to budget for this win-win-win community idea. It keeps light rail off 5th and solves the traffic detour problem on 4th Avenue with a 'LID' that can be converted to a park after construction. That would be a good step toward environmental justice and healing of past harms.

Thank you.

Brien Chow, TEA co-founder (transitequityforall.org)

Chong Wa Benevolent Association Outreach Chair

Sound Transit build *"The Park Lid"*

Dear Sound Transit Board,

Now that we're all rested from the Thanksgiving holiday and rarin' to go, here's our recommendation stemming from Sound Transit Workshop #2, based on the ST staff power point.

***One slide Sound Transit didn't create was that of the 4th Avenue *"The Park Lid"* with the community suggestion of a post-construction park/garden that *"The Park Lid"* could be used for.
(See rendering on last page.)***

A park with pathways for walking, strolling, jogging is a huge public benefit that contributes to environmental justice for *Chinatown, Japantown, Little Saigon, SODO and Pioneer Square.*

Thanks,

**Brien Chow
TEA co-founder
Transit Equity for All**

Transit Equity for All Recommendation:

Construction Phase (The LID):

"The Park Lid" concept for Draft EIS 4th Shallow station – community proposed 4th Ave traffic detour idea

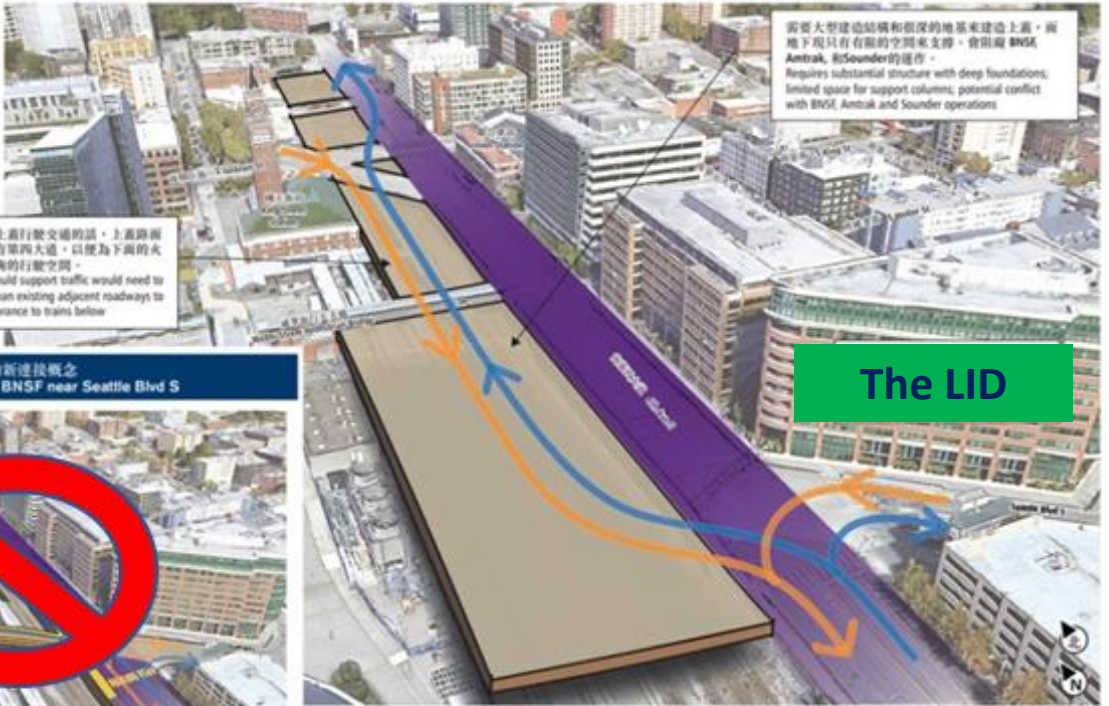
Finished Phase (The PARK):

"Community open green space and park development"

- **4th Ave traffic detour "The LID" – Will provide minimal traffic impact to "ALL" of the neighborhoods compared, to 4th and 5th Ave Station alternatives.**
- **Reduces "human hazards" during construction and will reduce railroad environmental smog.**
- ***"The Park Lid"* will provide less walking distance, to transit station for patrons from the Chinatown, Japantown, Little Saigon and Pioneer Square.**
- **Provides an Urban Park for families, workers and tourists.**
- **Connects the CID to the Waterfront.**
- **Provides a long overdue regional park destination.**
- **Draws local, regional and world tourist to the CID which will provide a space a urban park to relax and enjoy the surrounding neighborhoods.**
- **Will enhance the 100 Year Vision Plan.**
- **Generations of families will be able to visit and enjoy the area via Light Transit.**
- **Creates a very large "green footprint" to help improve the environment and confine and direct railroad pollution out of our ignored neighborhoods.**

《環境影響報告草案》第四大道淺層方案車站加建上蓋概念:社區提出第四大道交通繞道構想
Lid concept for Draft EIS 4th Shallow station – community proposed 4th Ave traffic detour idea

- 道路工程的界限
Limits of roadway construction
- 上蓋
Lid
- 往北行繞道
Northbound detour
- 往南行繞道
Southbound detour



如需要在上蓋行駛交通的話，上蓋路面會高於現有第四大道，以便為下面的火車提供足夠的行駛空間。
A lid that could support traffic would need to be higher than existing adjacent roadways to provide clearance to trains below.

其他構想: 近Seattle Blvd S橫過BNSF的新連接概念
Other idea: new connection across BNSF near Seattle Blvd S



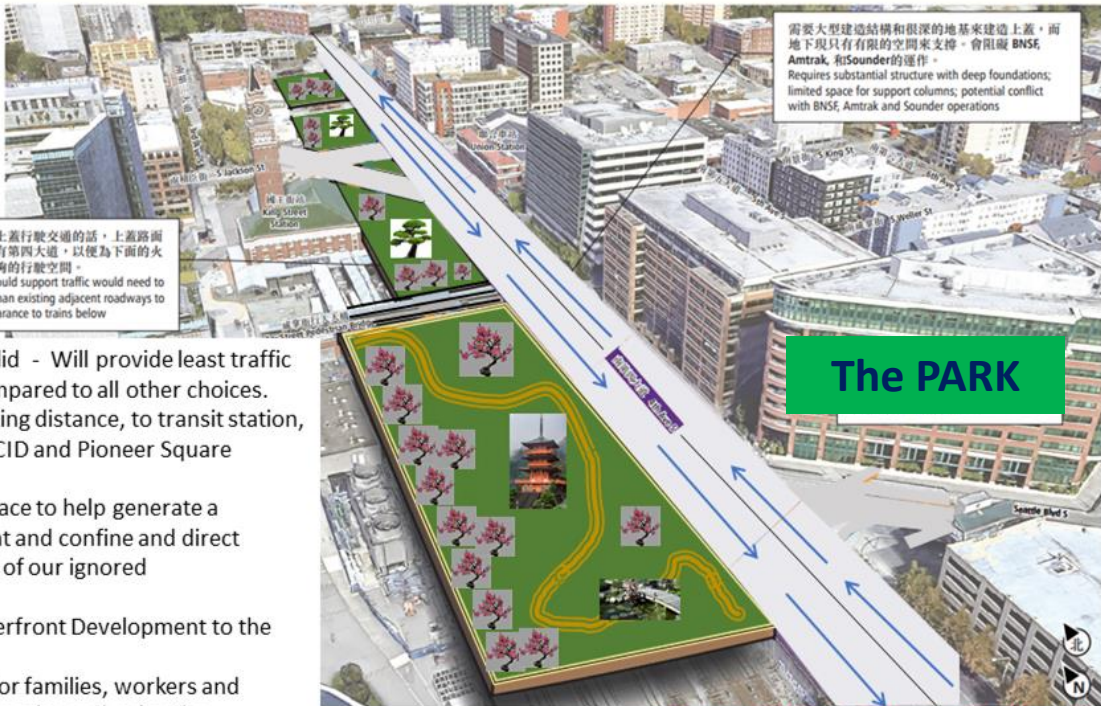
The LID

以上圖表僅展示社區要求的構想，目的只供討論。此構想尚未有作進一步設計。
Diagram illustrates community-requested concept for discussion purposes only. Concepts have not been engineered.



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The PARK

- 4th Ave traffic detour lid - Will provide least traffic impact to the CID compared to all other choices.
- Will provide less walking distance, to transit station, for patrons from the CID and Pioneer Square neighborhoods.
- Will provide green space to help generate a healthier environment and confine and direct railroad pollution out of our ignored neighborhoods.
- Will connect the Waterfront Development to the CID.
- Will provide a space for families, workers and tourist a urban park to relax and enjoy the surrounding neighborhoods.

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