

10/26/2023 Board of Directors Meeting Written Public Comment Submissions

Submissions

| | |
|--|---|
| Redmond Mayor Angela Birney | 2 |
| Bellevue Transportation Director Andrew Singelakis | 2 |
| Zion, Daniela, and Abdullahi representing the Youth Consortium, King County Councilmember Girmay Zahilay, Nikkita Oliver, and Dominique Davis | 2 |
| Transportation Choices Coalition, Cascade Bicycle Club, Commute Seattle, Hopelink, and Move Redmond | 3 |
| Comments Received after the meeting deadline | 3 |
| Betty Lau – Transcript of Verbal Comment | 4 |
| Brien Chow | 4 |

Redmond Mayor Angela Birney

The substance of this comment is within a letter, included at the end of this summary.

Chair Constantine, Members of the Board, and CEO Timm,

My letter of support for the Sound Transit 2024 Service Plan is attached. I respectfully urge adoption.

Very Best,

Angela Birney (she/her/hers)
Mayor, City of Redmond

Bellevue Transportation Director Andrew Singelakis

The substance of this comment is within a letter, included at the end of this summary.

Dear Chair Constantine and Members of the Board,

Please find an attached letter from Andrew Singelakis, Transportation Director for the City of Bellevue, expressing support for today's vote to approve the 2024 Service Plan, Phase 1. Bellevue offers our continued support as we move forward to the opening of the 2 Line from South Bellevue Station to Redmond Technology Station.

Please let me or Andrew know if you have any questions or feedback.

Zion, Daniela, and Abdullahi representing the Youth Consortium, King County Councilmember Girmay Zahilay, Nikkita Oliver, and Dominique Davis

Apologies for sending this your way a little late, but I wanted to flag a couple of [video testimonials](#) (linked) re: supporting the YAC. As well as quotes from the youth below.

I've copied the Meeting Comments e-mail so the Board of Directors receive these written comments below.

- *"The Youth Achievement Center will literally be providing healing and opportunities for the community that may not be possible without your support. We are funding this project because it directly impacts the community and makes it a better place."*

- Zion, Youth Consortium
- *“It is crucial to make sure that our youth know that we have their backs and we are going to be there for the long run.”*
 - Daniela, Youth Consortium
- *“We want you to join us and help us for your community, your own people, and your city.”*
 - Abdullahi, Youth Consortium

*Transportation Choices Coalition, Cascade Bicycle Club,
Commute Seattle, Hopelink, and Move Redmond*

The substance of this comment is within a letter, included at the end of this summary.

Dear Chair Constantine, Members of the Board, CEO Julie Timm, and Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in advance of the Sound Transit Board meeting today.

I've attached a joint letter from Cascade Bicycle Club, Commute Seattle, Hopelink, Move Redmond, and Transportation Choices Coalition regarding fares and parking.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment!

Respectfully,

Matthew J. Sutherland (he/him)
Advocacy Director

Transportation Choices

Comments Received after the meeting deadline

Betty Lau – Transcript of Verbal Comment

Dear Sound Transit Board Members,

I'm Betty Lau, co-founder of Transit Equity for All.

Let's apply bold thinking to reducing costs of a station on 4th Avenue. Lynnwood got a \$400 million low-cost loan from the FTA so you can too. Turn your staff loose on using state of the art construction techniques, for more savings and environmental justice. Throw in the cost of a parking garage other places get and we don't, for another hundred million or so. Split the remainder between the city, county, Feds and state – 4 ways cuz it's Regional!

The 4th Avenue viaduct needs replacing anyway so get creative. Your staff say half can be built while traffic continues on the other half. Can we lid it? Or maybe we don't need it at all cuz everyone will be taking transit! And other routes can be developed for freight traffic. Maybe route it to those 4 new lanes on the waterfront.

Ask Sec. of Transportation Millar for his advice. He's the real expert on the Board. Tap into his knowledge and expertise.

My point is Move Forward on 4th! Happy Halloween!

Thank you.

Brien Chow

Public Comment by Brien Chow at Sound Transit Board Meeting, Thursday, October 26, 2023, 1:30 p.m., Union Station

Hello Sound Transit Board Members,

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

I'm happy to inform you of the 37th Legislative District Democrats decision to endorse the 4th Avenue Hub at Union Station location... for the long promised and DEIS studied station.

The membership vote was Monday, Oct. 9.

The Resolution by the 37th... is based on Equity and Inclusion of BIPOC communities... and the best interests of the Region.

It's a great example of facts and logic prevailing over fear and ignorance.

I have here copies of the Resolution for each of you to read... study, and take to heart.

You must consider the system as whole and act as one body... rather than seeing what you can get for you own smaller area.

It's all about the teamwork and guiding Sound Transit staff to bring down costs and construction time.

Remember "Do not be on the wrong side of history... Move Forward on 4th!"

Thank you.
Brien Chow Co-Founder, Transit Equity for All

37th LD Democrats Resolution Endorsing the 4th Avenue Hub at Union Station

Background: Due to wide-spread community opposition, the Sound Transit Board informally paused plans to move forward on a new Chinatown International District (CID) light rail station on 5th Avenue. Despite super-majority community and regional consensus on the 2nd choice 4th Avenue Union Station alternative, the Sound Transit Board voted on March 23, 2023 to adopt two new alternatives called North of CID and South of CID stations as its preferred alternatives. These two, new alternatives require a new DEIS and are full of flaws, chief among them lack of accessibility and connectivity, with disproportionate negative impacts to people of color from the Southend and Eastside.

Whereas the Seattle Chinatown International District is on the nation's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places List;

Whereas the Sound Transit preferred alternatives of North & South of Chinatown International District deny transit access and connectivity to CID residents and businesses;

Whereas the Sound Transit preferred alternatives of North & South of Chinatown International District deprive 1200+ senior citizens of color access to light rail, violating ADA regulations;

Whereas the Sound Transit preferred alternatives of North & South of Chinatown International District will cause negative construction impacts without mitigation benefits;

Whereas the Sound Transit preferred alternatives of North & South of Chinatown International District will bypass CID, isolating CID businesses from the economic benefits of light rail;

Whereas the Sound Transit preferred alternatives of North & South of Chinatown International District will add extra transfers, longer walks, and unnecessarily lengthen commute times;

Whereas the Sound Transit preferred alternatives of North & South of Chinatown International District lack easy access and connectivity to other transit modes (Sounder, Amtrak, busses, streetcar, ferries, airport);

Be it resolved the 37th LD Democrats fully endorse the Chinatown International District 4th Avenue station location at Union Station, which provides the greatest connectivity for the region, as well as social and racial justice for the CID, an historically marginalized district of color that includes the last surviving Chinatown in the State of Washington; and

Be it resolved the 37th LD Democrats call upon the Sound Transit Board to keep its voter approved promise to locate new stations at 4th Avenue at Union Station and Midtown.



Connected Community
Enhanced Livability
Environmental Sustainability

October 23, 2023

By email

Hon. Dow Constantine, Chair, and Members of the Board
Julie Timm, CEO
Sound Transit
401 S. Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98014

RE: Support for 2024 Service Plan

Dear Chair Constantine, Members of the Board, and CEO Timm,

I am writing in support of adoption of your 2024 service plan, as previously expressed by many regional stakeholders in the joint letter transmitted in August, attached here for your convenience.

Thank you for the unceasing efforts of your staff and workers to deliver service as quickly as possible to the 2 Line and to the 1 Line extensions. I appreciate that the 2024 Service Plan draft Title VI Service Equity Analysis, consistent with the East Link Starter Line Title VI analysis, shows no disparate impacts for the East Link Starter Line (the initial segment of the 2 Line from South Bellevue to the Redmond Technology Station). Indeed, it shows that the service benefits will flow to a greater percentage of Title VI minority populations and Limited English Proficiency communities compared to the Sound Transit District average. The City of Redmond also appreciates that existing Sound Transit bus service will continue while the initial segment of the 2 Line comes online. I look forward to future engagement opportunities with Sound Transit on our local bus service needs for the full 2 Line.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Angela Birney".

Hon. Angela Birney, Mayor
City of Redmond

Attachment: Joint support letter dated Aug. 1, 2023



October 25, 2023

Via email

Hon. Dow Constantine, Chair
Members of the Board
Julie Timm, CEO
Sound Transit
401 S. Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98014

RE: Support for the 2024 Service Plan (Resolution No. R2023-31)

Dear Chair Constantine, Members of the Board, and CEO Timm:

On behalf of the City of Bellevue, I am writing in support of Resolution No. R2023-31, adopting the first phase of the 2024 Service Plan. We are excited that the 2024 Service Plan will make light rail more accessible to the Eastside by operating passenger service between the South Bellevue and Redmond Technology stations in Spring 2024.

Since 2008, the City of Bellevue has planned for growth with greater density and mobility connections in anticipation of East Link opening. We've partnered with Sound Transit for many years on a shared vision of a connected transit system with mobility options.

The 2024 Service Plan marks a significant step in realizing that vision of mobility on the Eastside. The 2 Line segment between the South Bellevue and Redmond Technology stations will help build ridership for the full 2 Line. Opening over six miles of track and eight stations will allow for equipment and operations testing, earlier use of vehicles and the Operations and Maintenance Facility East, and activation of idle facilities for safety and efficiency. We urge Sound Transit to monitor ridership to consider how service ending at 9:30 p.m. impacts mobility to swing and late-night shift workers, as well as social and cultural activities in the city.

The City of Bellevue is grateful to see the existing Sound Transit bus service will continue when the 2 Line initial segment starts. We look forward to future engagement opportunities with Sound Transit and King County Metro to ensure local bus service complements and provides ample opportunities for Bellevue residents and visitors to reach the 2 Line.

The City of Bellevue appreciates the significant work it has taken to advance the 2024 Service Plan and offer our continued support as we move forward to the opening of the 2 Line from South Bellevue Station to Redmond Technology Station.

Sincerely,

Andrew Singelakis, Transportation Director

Date: October 26, 2023
To: Sound Transit Leadership
From: Cascade Bicycle Club, Commute Seattle, Hopelink, Move Redmond,
Transportation Choices Coalition
Re: Comments on 2023 Link Light Rail Fares & Parking Program

Dear Sound Transit Board members and Sound Transit CEO Timm,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the 2023 Link Light Rail Fares & Parking Program. As Sound Transit is planning and building the most ambitious transit expansion in the country, it is important that you consider the following perspectives while evaluating the options for the 2023 Link Light Rail Fares & Parking Program.

Keep fares low/affordable with a flat fare structure: We strongly support increasing access to regional opportunities through affordable transit fares. At the same time, we recognize the agency's need to utilize fare revenue to sustain and improve your growing transit system and maintain service quality. In this context, we support a flat fare structure that provides passengers with straightforward and predictable pricing and offers clarity and budgeting ease for your organization. We recommend starting at \$2.75 to align more closely with King County Metro and other local transit services.

As you evolve your fare structures, we suggest you continue funding and implementing the fully subsidized low-income ORCA card pilot program, as well as ORCA LIFT, for low-income riders, seniors, and riders with disabilities to keep your services affordable and accessible to various rider groups.

Favor customer impact over outdated fiscal policies. It is more important to have a seamless and affordable fare structure than to meet farebox recovery targets. Given changing circumstances, we suggest not letting this policy dictate the best fare rate for the agency. Instead, look to modernize your fiscal policies.

Move toward fare capping. A simplification in fare structures is the first step towards implementing fare capping, which can help create more affordability and equity for those who cannot afford a monthly pass. We urge you to restart the conversation on making fare capping a reality as you re-evaluate other fare structures/policies. You could consider piloting this feature on ORCA LIFT cards to bring the most impact to lower-income riders.

Consider additional customer experience features. Enabling payment via phone, considering adding a day pass, and potential integration with the bikelink lockers - we know these things are on the table, but haven't been discussed recently. These features increase ease of use for riders and visitors to the region.

Engage regionally on fare structures and policies. Fare capping, identifying an appropriate ORCA LIFT threshold, prioritizing next-gen ORCA features, and more are all important issues

that warrant clear next steps. As the most regional of all the transit agencies, we look to Sound Transit to move forward these conversations in a transparent way.

Use an equity analysis: While flat fares are easy to administer and we believe have an overall benefit to people living throughout the region, we understand this could potentially place a disproportionate financial burden on individuals taking shorter, essential trips, especially those with limited means who rely on public transportation. We urge you to perform a comprehensive equity analysis before implementing a fare structure. This analysis should focus on understanding who typically takes what kind of trips and identifying which demographics might be disproportionately affected by each fare structure proposal. We recommend sharing this analysis with the Board at an early stage and making it a central driver of any staff proposals, including mitigation. While doing so, consider the fare rate that promotes regional integration, fosters transit ridership through equitable and straightforward pricing, and demonstrates financial stewardship, as stated on your [Online Open House](#) website.

Support Fare Ambassador program: We are grateful that the agency and the Board are examining how alternative fare enforcement programs, such as the Fare Ambassador program, can reduce harm and inequities from traditional police enforcement for fare evasion. While we endorse these alternatives within farebox recovery strategies, we emphasize the importance of disconnecting issues with enforcement or compliance from fare rate and structure discussions. We firmly believe that fare rates and structures should not be contingent upon present compliance conditions, and increasing fares for revenue is unfair to riders.

Fund Increased ORCA Business Passport Outreach: ORCA Business Passport allows employers to cover the cost of transit for their workers as a benefit of employment. As individual fares increase, ORCA Business Passport will be an even more important tool, especially for low-income workers. Increasing funding for ORCA outreach will help more employers provide this benefit to their teams, limiting the ridership impacts of future fare increases and making transit a more affordable option for more people in our region. Sound Transit should also work with other regional transit agencies to explore new strategies to reach priority audiences, including small and microbusinesses and BIPOC-owned businesses.

Parking program:

- **Daily pricing.** We support and recommend a shift toward daily pricing, which incentivizes users to pay for their actual usage and discourages behaviors tied to monthly parking, such as driving, simply because it's already paid for.
- **Use data.** We also suggest you continue using demand to determine which parking lots should have pricing and let demand influence price setting, at least to some extent.
- **Continue equity and engagement work.** The equity analysis you've outlined should serve as a guiding principle for maintaining lower rates for individuals with no alternative but to use the parking facilities, ensuring equitable and accessible parking access. Additionally, while considering parking proposals, we strongly advocate for thorough community engagement to explore alternative program designs and gather feedback

from the public. This engagement process will contribute to a more well-rounded and community-centered approach to parking management.

- **Explore incentive programs.** Consider how to encourage people who do live closer to stations to only use the parking if they need to. Right now, many people park and ride as default, but part of making their parking best serve the people who do need it is to incentivize walking, biking, and bussing to light rail when possible.

Thank you for taking this step toward better access and alignment across your services.

Sincerely,

Cascade Bicycle Club
Commute Seattle
Hopelink
Move Redmond
Transportation Choices Coalition