

*09/23/2024 Rider Experience and
Operations Committee Meeting Written
Public Comment Submissions*

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Guruansh Singh

Hello,

I am submitting this as a comment for the Rider Experience & Operations Committee meeting scheduled for 09/23/2024.

I am a resident of Seattle and frequent user of Sound Transit and King County Metro services.

It is my understanding that today 9/17/2024, there is an ongoing service issue that is resulting in single-tracking and 15 minute headways for the 1 line. In trying to plan a trip, I am currently accessing the real-time arrivals page for the 1 Line available here ([https://www.soundtransit.org/ride-with-us/routes-schedules/1-](https://www.soundtransit.org/ride-with-us/routes-schedules/1-line?direction=0&at=1726556400000&view=table&route_tab=arrivals&stops_0=40_N23%2C40_S01&stops_1=40_S01%2C40_N23)

[line?direction=0&at=1726556400000&view=table&route_tab=arrivals&stops_0=40_N23%2C40_S01&stops_1=40_S01%2C40_N23](https://www.soundtransit.org/ride-with-us/routes-schedules/1-line?direction=0&at=1726556400000&view=table&route_tab=arrivals&stops_0=40_N23%2C40_S01&stops_1=40_S01%2C40_N23))

Attached is a screenshot of the page which only shows scheduled departures, which are far removed from the reality on the tracks today based on the information provided in the service alert.

I would like to understand why there is absolutely no availability of real-time arrivals - as per the "arrivals key" - these are the "scheduled" 8 minute headways, which the service is clearly not meeting during this service issue. My understanding of the multi-million dollar PIMS systems that Sound Transit has invested in is that in such circumstances, real-time arrivals will be provided to better work around service issues such as today. Is that an incorrect assumption? If yes, then what utility is the PIMS serving when we only expect it to work when everything is already running on schedule - one could just read the schedule? If that is not the case, and real-time arrivals are expected during affected service durations, I would like to bring to the attention of the committee that as for this specific instance as noted above, the PIMS system has absolutely no useful information for me as a rider. This is not an isolated instance - I have experienced this on multiple occasions.

If the agency cannot effectively utilize tools such as PIMS at their disposal to mitigate passenger experience issues in outages in this current setup of a single, north-south train line, this does not inspire any confidence in a future where there are supposed to be multiple lines in multiple directions.

Thank you for looking into this.

Best,

Guruansh Singh

Carrie Barbee

Hi Olga.

I appreciate your response and understand that you, yourself did not make the decisions that bring me to contact Sound Transit. I have experimented with numerous routes the past two weeks and may have to go back to the 510.

Incidentally, your Link Rail broke down this very week on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. We sat at Symphony, Capital Hill, and U-District stations without any options. None of the passengers that live in Snohomish County had to easy option to go up to the street level to catch a commuter bus, because Community Transit no longer has commuter buses on street level. Thus, I drove Wednesday, Thursday and Friday to Harborview Medical Center because your Links were sporadically running, with no commuter bus options.

- Your Link Rails are packed with way too many passengers. We are not too far out from the COVID pandemic so this practice of cramming people together is a bit irresponsible.
- You don't appear to have operational backup plans for when trains get stuck, break down or other electrical failures
- There are no safety windows or ceiling exits
- Sound Transit did not disclose that they would dissolve Community Transit, forcing those of us that depend on public transportation to take your Link
- Sound Transit subterranean stations are unclean laden with urine, human and bird feces on escalator bannisters

Again, I have voted "yes" for every mass transit initiative. What I did not understand was that Sound Transit's intent was to create a monopoly where Snohomish County Commuters were forced to take your Link rails without enough room, frequency of trains nor easy connections that leave the West side of First Hill with minimal options. How could your Board of Directors not know this could happen?

Prior to September 14, 2024, thousands of us could get on one bus (413 or 415) at Ash Way P&R and be in Seattle in less than 40 minutes without taking a second or third connection to get to work. My commute now at best is close to 1.5 hours if you factor in connections. It's not much better if I drive from Everett to Lynnwood Transit Center because I'm caught in traffic getting back up to Everett.

Thanks for forwarding on these concerns as I know you did not make these decisions.

Carrie Barbee

From: Lee, Olga <Olga.Lee@soundtransit.org>

Sent: Wednesday, September 18, 2024 12:15 PM

To: Carrie Barbee <carriearbee@outlook.com>

Subject: RE: Carrie Barbee - 9/16/2024 CRM:05134555

Carrie,

Thank you for contacting Sound Transit. We appreciate you taking the time to express your concerns with us. Your feedback is important. I apologize for the negative impact

the current service changes have had on your daily commute. As a rider of public transportation myself, I know first-hand how frustrating it is to have your route change and feel like not for the greater good. I am truly sorry.

Our Service planning team continually monitors performance and identifies routes or trips that do not meet standards of our riders or that need additional investment. I have forward your comments to them for review.

If you would like for me to assist with finding an alternate route, please respond to this email with the following information:

- origin
- destination
- Time of arrival

Again, I am truly sorry for your negative experiences. If you need additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for contacting Sound Transit.

Thank you,
Olga Lee
Sound Transit Passenger Care
(888) 889-6368
www.soundtransit.org
Connect with us
facebook.com/SoundTransit

Original Customer Comments Submitted

Comment Submission Date: 9/18/2024 11:26 AM
Form Submitted:

Applicable Details:

ST Facility or Station: Pioneer Square Station

Line of Service: Link Light Rail
Route: 1 Line
Route Direction: 1 Line: Lynnwood to Angle Lake

Location Description: Ash Way to Seattle
Date of Occurrence: 9/16/2024 12:00 AM
Time of Occurrence: - Left Blank -

Comment Type: - Left Blank -
Subject: Overcrowding ~

Comments: Hi.

I filed a complaint a couple weeks ago about the changes to the commute from Everett after taking away the Community Transit commuter buses. I took the advice of the responder by experimenting with all the options they recommended.

The new Sound Transit schedules and the shutting down of direct routes Community Transit commuter buses is awful (minimizing alternate choices to not ride the new Link). I used to take one bus (413) to Seattle and now must take 2-3 if I do not want to drive to Lynnwood Transit Center. You either have to take a bus or Swift from Ash Way to Lynnwood TC and catch the Link. Once you catch the Link, you get to transfer (or walk) from Capital Hill or Pioneer Square to your destination if you work on first Hill. The link trains are so crammed with folks standing that it's an infection control risk. Yes, I voted for the Link, but I did not know they would take away the Community Transit commuter routes.

This is very bad for Snohomish County commuters.

Sincerely,

Carrie Barbee

Customer Contact Info Provided:

First Name: Carrie

Last Name: Barbee

Email: carriearbarbee@outlook.com

Street: - Left Blank -

City: - Left Blank -

State: - Left Blank -

Zip Code: 98203

Jill C. Beck

I'm sure you'll pass this on to the social media team instead of the powers that be:

The past 2 nights have been a cluster using Sound Transit to go to the stadiums. Less frequent trains with fewer cars. And tonight the Sounders are also playing.

The lack of forethought by Sound Transit should be shocking but then when I think of the lack of accountability, it isn't.

If you want ppl to use transit, how about treating them with respect? I know government entities aren't used to this but something to consider.

The problems continue and I'm sure you'll blame everything other than Sound Transit's lack of competence.

On Mon, Oct 16, 2023, 7:51 PM Jill Consor Beck <jill.c.beck@gmail.com> wrote:

Heh. My husband got a survey to evaluate Sound Transit, but I didn't. Nice. Well since you didn't want voices on the board that are actually critical of your organization, I'll add:

- The escalators never work
- People are passed out on the trains
- Drugs are prevalent
- You don't run enough trains during big events

But keep stacking your board with cheerleaders. That's the way you'll get better. Heck of a job!

Jill C. Beck

Founder, Go Long

jill@golong.me

Website: <http://golong.me>

Schedule a free consult [here](#)

<http://golong.substack.com>

IG/Threads: [@justgolong](#)

On Fri, May 26, 2023 at 3:49 PM Montee, Adam <Adam.Montee@soundtransit.org> wrote:
Hi Jill,

I've passed your comment on to our social media group so they can be aware of your displeasure.

Thank you again,

Adam Montee

Program Manager – Board Administration

Pronouns: He/Him/His

Executive Department

Sound Transit

Connect with us!

From: Jill Consor Beck <jill.c.beck@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, May 26, 2023 11:17 AM

To: Montee, Adam <Adam.Montee@soundtransit.org>

Subject: Re: Board Selection of North King County Community Oversight Panel Member

How about actually responding on social media on the ineptitude? No one from Sound Transit wants to be accountable. It's a joke from the top down.

So yeah, go encourage me to be involve while you do nothing to address feedback and only post RTs that say positive things about you.

On Fri, May 26, 2023, 11:09 AM Montee, Adam <Adam.Montee@soundtransit.org> wrote:
Good morning,

On behalf of the Sound Transit Board, I want to thank you for your interest in serving on the Community Oversight Panel. We were very pleased with the number of community members that offered their expertise and experience to serve in this capacity.

The Board has completed its selection process to fill panel vacancies for North King County. Although you were not selected for the Citizen Oversight Panel, I hope that you continue your involvement with Sound Transit. As we continue to implement the ST2 and ST3 programs, there will be many more opportunities for citizen participation.

Again, thank you for your interest.

Adam Montee

Program Manager – Board Administration

Pronouns: He/Him/His

Executive Department

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Paul Heise

The photos described in the comment below are included at the end of this summary

Dear Members of the Rider Experience and Operations Committee,

As a “professional commuter” for the past 6 1/2 years, I have relied heavily on public transit, including the Community Transit route 412, which was discontinued and replaced by the 901 route which now takes me from my neighborhood to the Lynnwood Transit Center. Last week, I tried using the much anticipated light rail, and I feel compelled to share serious concerns about the safety and security on this system.

My first two rides earlier in the week, on Tuesday and Wednesday, were for commuting to my office in Seattle. Those trips were disrupted by mechanical issues, which were addressed at the beginning of the meeting today. One item that is concerning is the lack of security on the train once we left the Lynnwood station. On Wednesday, a passenger got on in Shoreline and sat next to me who was openly drinking bourbon from a bottle. Then, when we were transferred to an already overcrowded train due to the breakdown, I witnessed another individual with an open container of beer (photo attached). All of this, plus my new commute is now 30-mins longer (1.5 hrs. vs. 45-50 mins) due to having to switch from bus to light rail.

On Thursday, my friend and I took the light rail from Lynnwood to attend a Mariners game. As we prepared to depart, we noticed a disturbance involving a man who appeared to be homeless or possibly suffering from a mental episode. Several security guards asked him to leave the train, but after a brief argument, the man refused. To my surprise, the security team withdrew, leaving him on board. Once the doors closed, this individual caused further disruptions, engaging in some minor pushing, and shoving with other passengers. Fearing for my safety and that of others, I texted security, who informed me that police would meet us at the next station. However, upon arrival, the only visible security presence was one guard leaning against a fence, preoccupied with his phone (photo attached) that did nothing to help. The situation was not resolved until the man was forcibly removed by frustrated passengers at the South Shoreline station.

Given these experiences, I have some important questions for the committee to consider:

- Why doesn't Sound Transit require passengers to pass through turnstiles like other major systems, such as those in New York, Japan, or Vancouver? Such systems seem to reduce

fare evasion and provide an added layer of security by ensuring all riders are legitimate ticket holders.

- Why is there such limited fare enforcement, and what steps can be taken to ensure a more consistent presence of security officers to prevent disturbances and ensure a safer environment?
- Are there plans to address the open container violations and disturbances caused by individuals who may be struggling with homelessness or mental health issues? What policies are in place to balance compassion for those in need while protecting paying passengers?

I strongly urge the committee to address these concerns and consider implementing stricter fare enforcement measures, possibly including the installation of turnstiles, to ensure a safer and more secure rider experience for all. Until then, I will no longer be using the light rail and instead will revert to commuting via bus with likeminded passengers who share my same concerns.

Thank you for your time and attention to these critical issues.

Respectfully,
Paul Heise

9/23/24 Paul Heise Written Public Comment



