

June 21, 2023

Board of Directors
Sound Transit
401 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Board Chair Constantine and Sound Transit Board Members:

We, the undersigned organizations, urge that the Sound Transit Board maintain its selection of the Denny Westlake (DT-1) preferred alternative for Ballard Link construction.

As *The Urbanist* reported on June 1, the DT-1 alternative scores highest among the four options for maximizing rider performance and minimizing risk. It is also clear that the DT-1 option is most compatible with plans to site a South Lake Union station at Harrison Street.

We cannot overstate the importance of the planned station at Harrison Street. This station would provide, as Mayor Harrell acknowledged on May 25, a “critical” Sound Transit connection for tens of thousands of riders on the Aurora bus corridor. The DT-1 alternative including Harrison Street represents an historic step toward our future as a fully accessible, mass-transit city.

Mayor Harrell suggests further assessment of the Shifted West alternative without abandoning plans for Harrison Street. This Board already knows that the Shifted West alternative is almost certainly incompatible with a Harrison Street station. Shifted West proponents rely on arguments rooted in short-term thinking. Calls for further assessment belie Shifted West proponents’ own pledged commitments to resilient decarbonization and increased access to South Lake Union.

We share Board Member Balducci and Board Vice Chair Keel’s concerns over further delays to construction. Rider performance should be our core priority. The DT-1 alternative is a clear path to a Ballard Link extension that efficiently balances the impacts of construction with the benefits of reducing emissions and economic insecurity through increased ridership.

This Board should stay true to its commitment to safe and efficient transit for every person in Seattle and the Central Sound by continuing to pursue the DT-1 alternative with no further delay.

Sincerely,

Transit Riders Union
The Urbanist
350 Seattle
Feet First
Seattle Subway
Sierra Club Seattle