August 29, 2023

To:
Mayor of Seattle
Seattle City Council
Greg Spotts, Director, Seattle DOT (SDOT)

Via Email

Re: The Draft Seattle Transportation Plan - Thank you to Seattle Leadership, Equity, Staff commendation, and Providing comment for the Public Record

Dear Mayor Harrell, Council President Juarez, Members of Seattle City Council, and SDOT Director Spotts,

On behalf of Seattle Subway, The Urbanist, and the Chair of the Sierra Club Seattle Group, Robert Cruickshank, we are writing to thank you for SDOT’s August 2023 Draft Seattle Transportation Plan (STP)—specifically its Figure 8: “Potential Link Light Rail and Sounder Commuter Rail Expansion Opportunities” on page T-41—and to provide our feedback and comment for the public record.

Thank you for your Leadership
First and foremost, we would like to thank the current members of the Seattle City Council who sponsored and passed 2023 Consent Package Voting Group B specifically SLI SDOT-305-B-001-2023, and those who in 2022 sponsored and passed of SLI SDOT-004-B-001-2022.

We thank all City of Seattle leaders including Mayor Harrell and Director Spotts for this vision delivering on promises to our partners in the State Legislature who gave us the authority to fund futureproofing and expansion of exclusive-right-of-way rail transit with RCW 81.104.220-230 for Enhanced Service Zones (ESZ) in various cities in our Regional Transit Authority Area. We hope that working with our regional partners, the City of Seattle can be champions of ESZs being used to future proof ST3 for a regional ST4 ballot measure, allowing the ST3 system to operate without disruption during future construction of the ST4 network expansion.

Equity
We know that according to the APTA, a Seattle resident who used a monthly transit pass instead of driving in June of 2016 saved $11,267 per year, on average. Equity means the cost of car ownership should never be the price of entry to participate in our region’s economy. Seattle’s Equity and Climate Justice goals must include renewably-powered, rapid transit travel times that
are competitive with driving for those who don’t have the privilege of car ownership. Seattle’s Equity and Climate Justice goals must also include the positive network effects that are only provided by additional rapid, high capacity transit expansion potentially included in future regional transit expansion ballot measures beyond ST3.

Staff commendation
The team members of the Seattle Department of Transportation’s Policy and Planning Division all deserve raises and bonuses for their “yeoman’s work” on the Draft Seattle Transportation Plan first released August 2023. Seattle Subway and our partners are only empowered to give them our commendation for their diligent, dedicated work. We want to specifically recognize Transportation Planning Manager Jonathan Lewis, Senior Transportation Planner Benjamin Smith, and Associate Transportation Planner Michelle Abunaja for their work on the “Transit Element” of the Seattle Transportation Plan.

Comment for the record on the Draft Seattle Transportation Plan’s Figure 8: “Potential Link Light Rail and Sounder Commuter Rail Expansion Opportunities” on page T-41
SDOT’s Policy and Planning Division has done excellent work on this particular vision and we appreciate all levels of the City of Seattle’s leadership in releasing this Long Range Plan vision. We would like to provide feedback by drawing attention to our following three (3) comments on Draft Seattle Transportation Plan’s Figure 8: “Potential Link Light Rail and Sounder Commuter Rail Expansion Opportunities” on page T-41, for the record:

1. **West Seattle to Burien:** we note that corridor 1 of the Regional Transit Long-Range Plan (Page 12 of 24), as adopted by the Sound Transit Board on December 18, 2014 includes a “Downtown Seattle to Burien” corridor. And the Sound Transit 3 System Plan Project List adopted by the Sound Transit Board of Directors on June 23, 2016 includes an “HCT Study: Light rail extending from West Seattle to Burien, Tukwila, and Renton”. **We request that the Final Seattle Transportation Plan Figure 8 reflect that West Seattle to Burien is included as “LRT ST4 Expansion from ST 2014 Long Range Plan” at least as far as the City’s southern border.**

2. **Madison Street:** we note that corridor 4 of the Regional Transit Long-Range Plan (Page 12 of 24), as adopted by the Sound Transit Board on December 18, 2014 includes a “Downtown Seattle along Madison Street” corridor. We also note that on February 1, 2016, the Seattle City Council adopted an amended Transit Master Plan, which on page 3-3 included an “Other Seattle High Capacity Transit Corridor” approximately along Madison Street (displayed as a pink-purple color corridor). Seattle Subway, the Urbanist, and the Sierra Club Seattle Group’s Chair also recognize and are extremely supportive of the excellent work that the City of Seattle, King County Metro, and Sound Transit have done collaboratively on the Madison Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Once completed, Madison BRT will be an excellent improvement. However, **we request that the Final Seattle Transportation Plan include the ST LRP and Seattle TMP Madison Street corridor as a Figure 8 “connectivity option” from Downtown Seattle to the currently-displayed connectivity options in approximately Seattle’s Central**
We expect that Madison BRT will act as a localized service with more numerous stations along the corridor compared to a potential Link rail expansion opportunity in the Madison Corridor. The First Hill Neighborhood, its extremely necessary community services, and regional health equity require that the long term vision incorporate future Link rail network access. Without this included in the long range plan vision, the City of Seattle condemns numerous underserved populations to forever having more limited access to health care compared to those driving.

3. **Children’s Hospital to Sand Point**: we note that the Sound Transit 3 System Plan Project List adopted by the Sound Transit Board of Directors on June 23, 2016 includes an “HCT Study of Northern Lake Washington” including connections from Ballard all the way to Warren G Magnuson Park. **We request that the Final Seattle Transportation Plan include as a Figure 8 “connectivity option” Ballard to Warren G Magnuson Park, beyond the current end point of approximately Children’s Hospital with at least one additional station’s worth of corridor to Warren G Magnuson Park.** Warren G Magnuson Park contains many units of affordable housing (at least 313 units) and numerous non-profit organizations are located there.

Thank you very much for your excellent work and your consideration of this feedback as you finalize the Seattle Transportation Plan. We look forward to being partners with you and your successors to implement the vision expressed in the Final Seattle Transportation Plan. As always please feel free to contact us with any questions or for further discussion of the concerns identified above and we will look forward to providing more feedback about the balance of Draft STP.

Best Regards,

Ben Broesamle  
COO, Treasurer  
Seattle Subway

Doug Trumm  
Publisher  
The Urbanist

Robert Cruickshank  
Chair, Sierra Club Seattle Group  
Personally

CC  
Francisca Stefan, Deputy Director, Seattle DOT  
Jonathan Lewis, Transportation Planning Manager, Policy and Planning Division, Seattle DOT  
Benjamin Smith, Senior Transportation Planner, Policy and Planning Division, Seattle DOT  
Michelle Abunaja, Assoc. Transportation Planner, Policy and Planning Division, Seattle DOT  
Feedback Email Account, Seattle Transportation Plan, Seattle DOT  
Various additional City Staff and Seattle City Council Legislative Aides
Attachments
Attachment 1: “Long Range Plan Map (Page 12 of 24), December 18, 2014 Regional Transit Long-Range Plan, Sound Transit”
Attachment 2: “Sound Transit 3 System Plan Project List, Adopted June 23, 2016, Sound Transit”
Attachment 1: “Long Range Plan Map (Page 12 of 24), December 18, 2014 Regional Transit Long-Range Plan, Sound Transit”
Attachment 2: Page 1 of “Sound Transit 3 System Plan Project List, Adopted June 23, 2016, Sound Transit”

SOUND TRANSIT 3

SOUND TRANSIT 3 SYSTEM PLAN PROJECT LIST
The following list describes projects approved as part of the Sound Transit 3 Plan adopted by the Sound Transit Board of Directors on June 23, 2016.

PROJECT NAME | MODE | DESCRIPTION
---|---|---
Redmond Technology Center Station to Downtown Redmond | Light Rail | This project extends East Link to downtown Redmond, as described in Sound Transit Board Resolution R2013-30 and the FTA and FHWA Record of Decision. The project would include two new stations, one with parking at east Redmond and a second in downtown Redmond.
Project completion: 2024

Kent/Des Moines to Federal Way Transit Center | Light Rail | This project extends light rail south from Kent/Des Moines to Federal Way, with stations serving South 272nd Street and the Federal Way Transit Center. The scheduled opening from Angle Lake to Kent/Des Moines has been adjusted to open at the same time as the extension to Federal Way.
Project completion: 2024

Federal Way Transit Center to Tacoma Dome | Light Rail | This project extends light rail from the Federal Way Transit Center to Tacoma via I-5 with four new stations in the south Federal Way, Fibs and east Tacoma areas, and at the Tacoma Dome Station.
Project completion: 2030

Downtown Seattle to West Seattle | Light Rail | This project builds light rail from downtown Seattle to the vicinity of West Seattle’s Alaska Junction neighborhood with an alignment primarily on an elevated roadway, and a new rail-only fixed span crossing of the Duwamish River. This project includes five new or expanded stations at the Stadium, Downtown, Alaska, and Alaska Junction areas, with a transfer connection at 1200.
Project completion: 2030

Ballard to Downtown Seattle | Light Rail | This project builds light rail from downtown Seattle to Ballard’s Market Street area with a new rail-only subway through Seattle Center/I-5 and South Lake Union. The project will be constructed in conjunction with a new downtown Seattle light rail tunnel, which will extend from International District/Chinatown to the Denny Station. The Ballard to downtown Seattle project includes elevated light rail on 10th Avenue West and Elliott Avenue West and a new movable bridge over Salmon Bay. Five new stations serve the areas of South Lake Union, Seattle Center, Smith Cove, Interbay, and Ballard.
Project completion: 2035

Downtown Seattle Light Rail Tunnel | Light Rail | This project builds a second light rail tunnel in downtown Seattle that provides capacity for the entire system to move through the area. The tunnel will be constructed as part of the Ballard to downtown Seattle light rail project, which includes a subway that extends from downtown Seattle through the Seattle Center/I-5 and South Lake Union neighborhoods. The downtown tunnel will extend from International District/Chinatown to the Denny Station with four new and expanded stations at International District/Chinatown, Miko Walkway, Westlake, and Denny.
Project completion: 2035

Lynnwood to Everett | Light Rail | This project extends light rail from the Lynnwood Transit Center to Everett Station via the Southwest Everett Industrial Center with both elevated and at-grade sections. The project includes six new stations at West Alderwood Mall, Ash Way, Master, Southwest Everett Industrial Center, SR 526/Woodway, and Everett Station. The project also includes one provisional station, at SR 99 Airport Road. This provisional station would require identification of additional funding not currently included in the ST3 System Plan in order to be built.
Project completion: 2036

South Kirkland to Issaquah | Light Rail | This project builds light rail from South Kirkland to Issaquah with four new stations at south Kirkland, the Richards Road area, Eastgate near Bellevue, and central Issaquah, with one provisional station in the Lake Sammamish area. This provisional station would require identification of additional funding not currently included in the ST3 System Plan in order to be built.
Project completion: 2041

Infil Light Rail Station: South Graham Street | Light Rail | This project builds a new infill station on the Link light rail line in the vicinity of South Graham Street.
Project completion: 2031

Infil Light Rail Station: South Boeing Access Road | Light Rail | This project builds a new infill station on the Link light rail line in the vicinity of South Boeing Access Road and I-5.
Project completion: 2031

Infil Light Rail Station: Northeast 150th Street | Light Rail | This project builds a new infill station at I-5 and NE 150th Street along the Lynnwood Link Extension.
Project completion: 2031

Tacoma Link Extension to Tacoma Community College | Light Rail | This project extends Tacoma Link system farther west to Tacoma Community College, adding six new stations.
Project completion: 2039

BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) & BUS PROJECTS

1400 Bus Rapid Transit | Bus Rapid Transit | This project establishes Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from the Lynnwood Transit Center to the Burton Transit Center via I-405 and SR 518. The project relies on the I-405 express toll toll system where available, and Business Access Transit (BAT) lanes on SR 518 from Tukwila to Burien. Project elements include parking, station access improvements, and 11 stations, including a new transit center in South Renton and new stations at Northeast 55th Street with BAT lanes extending toward Downtown Kirkland and at Northeast 44th Street in Renton.
Project completion: 2024

Northeast 145th Street and SR 522 Bus Rapid Transit | Bus Rapid Transit | This project establishes BRT from the line station at I-5 and Northeast 145th Street to UW Bothell, with service continuing at lower frequencies to Woodinville. On Northeast 145th Street, this project includes transit priority signal treatments to facilitate BRT movement through corridor bottleneck.
On SR 522 the majority of the corridor through Lake Forest Park, Kenmore and Bothell will feature BAT lanes, with transit-supportive enhancements on arterials from downtown Bothell to UW Bothell. This project includes nine pairs of stations with additional parking at Lake Forest Park, Kenmore and Bothell and an expanded transit center at UW Bothell.
Project completion: 2024

King County Metro Rapid Ride C and D and Madison Street Capital Improvements | Bus Rapid Transit | This project provides a capped contribution to help design and implement transit priority improvements along King County Metro’s Rapid Ride C and D lines that provide BRT service to Ballard and West Seattle as early deliveries to provide improved speed and reliability in advance of light rail starting operations in these areas. The project also includes a contribution to funding for Madison Street BRT in Seattle.
Project completion: 2024

Sound Transit 3: System Plan Project List
June 23, 2016

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| PROJECT NAME | MODE DESCRIPTION |:
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<tr>
<td>ST Express Service</td>
<td>Express Bus: This project funds operations for ST Express regional bus service maintaining existing express bus service in future High Capacity Transit (HCT) corridors, with an emphasis on long-haul connections between population and employment centers and providing inter with access to rail hubs. Frequent service between Lake and Tacoma Dome Station is included. Project completion: ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposed Local Service Opportunity on SR 167</td>
<td>Bus: This project provides opportunities for buses to use shoulders on freeway and state route facilities during periods of congestion in general traffic and HOV lanes. This project is made possible by Sound Transit's Access Policy. Additional program elements include extending platforms to accommodate trains up to 18 cars in length, track and signal upgrades, and other related infrastructure to facilitate additional capacity. Project completion: 2019-2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Improvements to Improve Bus Service and Reliability between East SeaTac and Sea-Tac Airport</td>
<td>Bus: This project provides capital improvements to facilitate the efficient flow of new and expanded bus connections to Sea-Tac Airport. Project completion: 2019-2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Capital Enhancements for Speed, Reliability and Conveniences along Pacific Avenue</td>
<td>Bus: This project provides capital contributions to Sound Transit for bus capital enhancements for speed, reliability and conveniences along Pacific Avenue from Tukwila to Sea-Tac. Project completion: 2019-2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sammamish Park and Ride</td>
<td>Bus parking: This project builds a surface park-and-ride facility in north Sammamish. The park-and-ride will be in coordination with the City of Sammamish. Project completion: 2024</td>
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**SOUNDER COMMUTER RAIL PROJECTS**

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<th>PROJECT NAME</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sounder South Capital Improvements Program</td>
<td>Commuter Rail: This project establishes a program of capital elements that will be used to meet growing demand for Sounder South. The program will include improvements for pedestrian, bicyclist, bus, and private vehicles, prioritized per Sound Transit's Access Policy. Additional program elements include extending platforms to accommodate trains up to 16 cars in length, track and signal upgrades, and other related infrastructure to facilitate additional capacity. Project completion: 2024-2036</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sounder Expansion to DuPont</td>
<td>Commuter Rail: This project extends Sounder commuter rail service from Lakewood to DuPont with two new stations at stations at the Tukwila and DuPont stations. Project completion: 2036</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sounder North Parking</td>
<td>Commuter Rail: This project would provide an early deliverable with the STS System Plan by providing additional parking at Multihex and Edmonds Sounder Stations. Project completion: 2024</td>
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**HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT (HCT) STUDIES, POLICIES & PROGRAMS**

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<tr>
<th>POLICIES AND PROGRAMS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Future System Planning</td>
<td>This project includes funds for planning efforts supporting continued progress toward implementing Sound Transit’s Long-Range Plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCT Study: Light rail extending from West Seattle to Burien and to Renton via South Lake Union and Interbay</td>
<td>This study examines a light rail extension from West Seattle to Burien and to Renton via South Lake Union and Interbay. The study would be completed in coordination with local transit partners to examine a variety of options for service provision and to maximize opportunities for regional integration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCT Study: Northern Lake Washington</td>
<td>This study would examine options for expanding light rail transit connections across northern Lake Washington that may be needed when demand exceeds available capacity. This study would examine alternatives including and parallel to SR-522 and SR-530, as well as connections from Ballard to Kirkland, Sand Point to Kirkland, and Redmond/or/and Bellevue. This study would also examine connections to the University of Washington. This study can consider potential upgrades in existing service and/or improved connections. It should be completed in coordination with local transit partners to examine a variety of options for service provision and to maximize opportunities for regional integration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCT Study: Commuter Rail to Enumclaw</td>
<td>This study examines a future commuter rail connection from Enumclaw to Sounder south line service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCT Study: Connections from Everett to North Everett</td>
<td>This study examines a future light rail extension from Everett to north Everett.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCT Study: Tacoma Dome Station to Tacoma Mall</td>
<td>This study examines a future light rail extension from Tacoma Dome Station to the Tacoma Mall area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCT Environmental Study: Path to Bellevue</td>
<td>This study would complete an environmental study to examine HCT options from Bothell to Bellevue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>System Access Program</td>
<td>Policies and Programs: This program would fund access improvements for Sound Transit stations and facilities including non-motorized access, bicycle parking, and park and ride facilities. This program would be implemented per Sound Transit's System Access Policy. This program would provide funding in addition to the non-motorized access funds included for individual projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation and Technology</td>
<td>Policies and Programs: This program would fund research, analysis and implementation of innovative best practices, partnerships and technologies to improve services and enhance efficiency of regional mobility outside of new investments in large capital projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transit-Oriented Development Planning Program</td>
<td>Policies and Programs: This program would fund Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) analysis and support beyond the planning phase of transit capital project development in anticipation of sale, lease, or transfer of surplus properties or real property to third parties. All analysis and property disposition would be conducted in accordance with applicable land use policy including TOD Policy (Resolution No. R2013-24). This program would provide funding in addition to the STS funds assumed for regional equitable TOD strategy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Light Rail Operations and Maintenance Facilities</td>
<td>Policies and Programs: This program would fund Operations and Maintenance facilities to accommodate additional light rail capacity. One in the Lynnwood to Everett Corridor and one in the Federal Way to Tacoma Corridor. Specific locations will be determined as part of light rail development in each corridor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility</td>
<td>Bus: This program would fund a new bus operations and maintenance facility to accommodate the new and existing bus fleet required for bus and ST Express bus service. The facility would be located in the vicinity of the ST Express facilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Light Rail Vehicles</td>
<td>Light Rail: This program would purchase 225 new light rail vehicles to operate the STS light rail system.</td>
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