



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**

**District.** 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**

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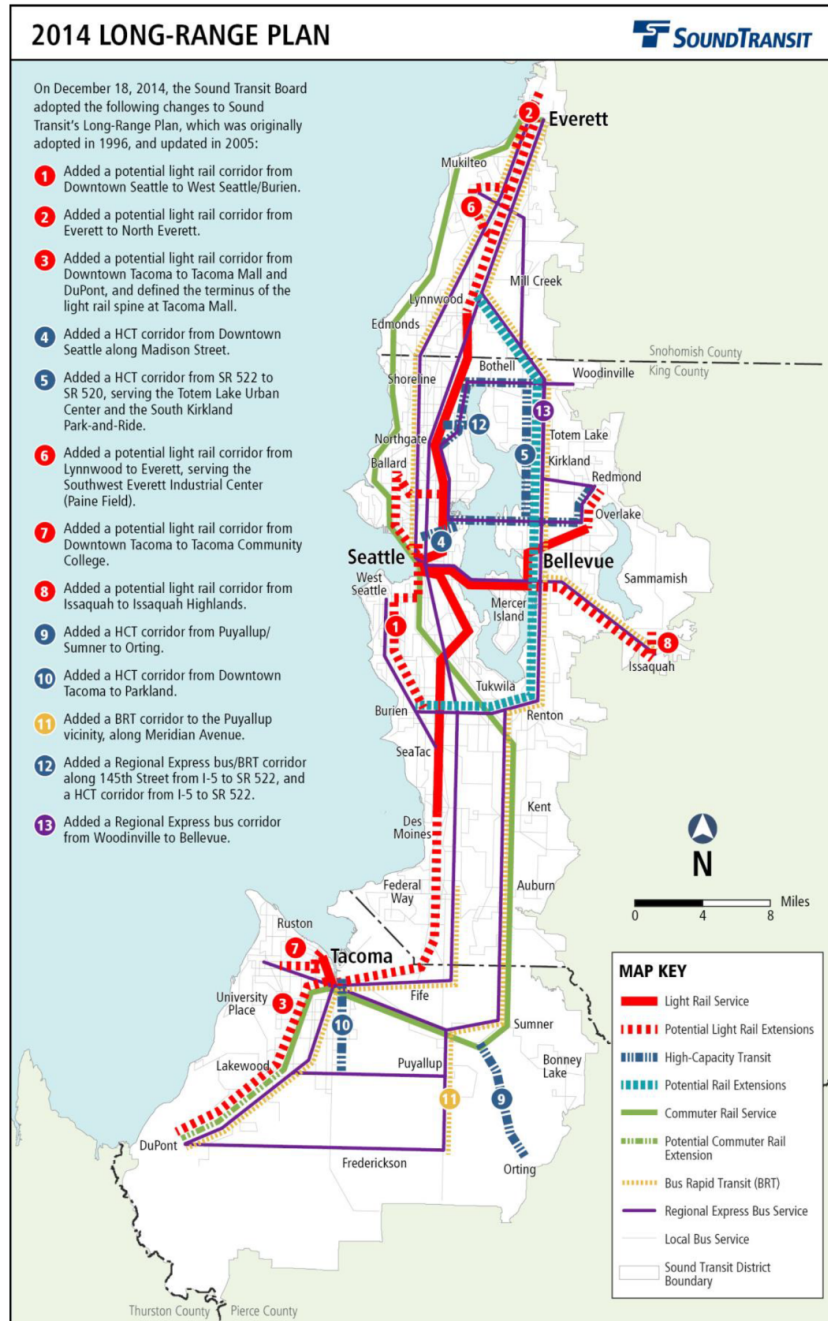
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Various additional City Staff and Seattle City Council Legislative Aides

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
<b>LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT PROJECTS</b>		
Redmond Technology Center Station to Downtown Redmond	Light Rail	This project extends East Link to downtown Redmond, as described in Sound Transit Board Resolution R2013-09 and the FTA and FHWA Record of Decision. The project would include two new stations, one with parking at southeast 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 272 <sup>nd</sup> 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, Fife 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 guideway, and a new rail-only fixed span crossing of the Duwamish River. This project includes five new or expanded stations at the Stadium, Delridge, Avalon, and Alaska Junction areas, with a transfer connection at SODO. 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/Uptown 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 15 <sup>th</sup> Avenue West and Elliott Avenue West and a rail-only 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 this 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/Uptown 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, Midtown, 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, Mariner, Southwest Everett Industrial Center, SR 526/Evergreen 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 College, and central Issaquah, with one provisional station in the Lakemont 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
Infill 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
Infill 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
Infill Light Rail Station: Northeast 130 <sup>th</sup> Street	Light Rail	This project builds a new infill station at I-5 and NE 130 <sup>th</sup> 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
<b>BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) &amp; BUS PROJECTS</b>		
I-405 Bus Rapid Transit	Bus Rapid Transit	This project establishes Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from the Lynnwood Transit Center to the Burien Transit Center via I-405 and SR 518. The project relies on the I-405 express 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 85 <sup>th</sup> Street with BAT lanes extending toward Downtown Kirkland and at Northeast 44 <sup>th</sup> Street in Renton. Project completion: 2024
Northeast 145 <sup>th</sup> Street and SR 522 Bus Rapid Transit	Bus Rapid Transit	This project establishes BRT from the Link station at I-5 and Northeast 145 <sup>th</sup> Street to UW Bothell, with service continuing at lower frequencies to Woodinville. On Northeast 145 <sup>th</sup> Street, this project includes transit priority spot treatments to facilitate BRT movement through corridor bottlenecks. 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 deliverables to provide improved speed and reliability in advance of light rail starting operations to these areas. The project also includes a contribution to funding for Madison Street BRT in Seattle. Project completion: 2024

Attachment 2 Continued: Page 2 of “Sound Transit 3 System Plan Project List, Adopted June 23, 2016, Sound Transit”

PROJECT NAME	MODE	DESCRIPTION
ST Express Service	Express Bus	This project funds operations for ST Express regional bus service maintaining interim express bus service in future High Capacity Transit (HCT) corridors, with an emphasis on long-haul connections between population and employment centers and providing riders with access to rail hubs. Frequent service between Lakewood and Tacoma Dome Station is included. Project completion: ongoing
Proposed Bus on Shoulder Program: Opportunities along I-5, I-405, I-90, SR 518, and SR 167	Bus	This program provides opportunities for buses to use shoulders on freeway and state route facilities during periods of congestion in general traffic and/or HOV lanes. This program will require coordination and further study with transit partners, WSDOT and Federal Highway Administration in order to determine locations that may be feasible. Project completion: 2019-2024
Capital Enhancements to Improve Bus Speed and Reliability between East Pierce County Cities and Sumner Sounder Station	Bus	This project provides capital improvements to facilitate the efficient flow of new and expanded bus connections to Sumner Station. Project completion: 2019-2024
Bus Capital Enhancements for Speed, Reliability and Convenience along Pacific Avenue (Tacoma)	Bus	This project provides a capital contribution to Pierce Transit for bus capital enhancements for speed, reliability and convenience along Pacific Avenue in Tacoma. Project completion: 2019-2024
North Sammamish Park-and-Ride	Bus parking	This project builds a surface park-and-ride in north Sammamish. The site for the park-and-ride will be determined in coordination with the City of Sammamish. Project completion: 2024
<b>SOUNDER COMMUTER RAIL PROJECTS</b>		
Sounder South Capital Improvements Program	Commuter Rail	This project establishes a program of capital elements that would be used to meet growing demand for Sounder South. Access elements could include improvements for pedestrians, bicyclists, buses, and private vehicles, prioritized per Sound Transit's Access Policy. Additional program elements include extending platforms to accommodate trains up to 10 cars in length, track and signal upgrades, and other related infrastructure to facilitate additional capacity. Project completion: 2024-2036
Sounder Expansion to DuPont	Commuter Rail	This project extends Sounder commuter rail service from Lakewood to DuPont with two new stations with parking at Tillicum and DuPont. Project completion: 2036
Sounder North Parking	Commuter Rail	This project would provide an early deliverable within the ST3 System Plan by providing additional parking at Mukilteo and Edmonds Sounder Stations. Project completion: 2024
<b>HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT (HCT) STUDIES, POLICIES &amp; PROGRAMS</b>		
Future System Planning	Policies and Programs	This project includes funds for planning efforts supporting continued progress toward implementing Sound Transit's Long-Range Plan.
HCT Study: Light rail extending from West Seattle to Burien, Tukwila and Renton	Light Rail	This study examines a light rail extension from West Seattle to Burien and to Renton via Tukwila International Boulevard Station. 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.
HCT Study: Northern Lake Washington	Light Rail	This study would examine options for expanding light rail transit connections across northern Lake Washington that may be needed when ridership demand exceeds available capacity. This study would examine alternatives including and parallel to SR 522 and SR 520, as well as connections from Ballard to Kirkland, Sand Point to Kirkland, and Redmond and/or 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.
HCT Study: Commuter Rail to Orting	Commuter Rail	This study examines a future commuter rail connection from Orting to Sounder south line service.
HCT Study: Connections from Everett to North Everett	Light Rail	This study examines a future light rail extension from Everett to north Everett.
HCT Study: Tacoma Dome Station to Tacoma Mall	Light Rail	This study examines a future light rail extension from Tacoma Dome Station to the Tacoma Mall area.
HCT Environmental Study: Bothell to Bellevue	HCT	This study would complete an environmental study to examine HCT options from Bothell to Bellevue.
System Access Program (Pedestrian and bicycle access, bicycle parking, transit)	Policies and Programs	This program would fund access improvements for Sound Transit stations and facilities including non-motorized access, bicycle parking and facilities, bus transit access, and expanded drop-off/pick-up as needed. This program includes a mode of access data collection program and station area access studies. Funds would be prioritized per Sound Transit's System Access Policy. This program would provide funding in addition to the non-motorized access funds included for individual projects.
Innovation and Technology Program	Policies and Programs	This program would fund research, analysis and implementation of innovative best practices, partnerships and technologies to increase ridership, improve service and enhance efficiency of regional mobility outside of new investments in large capital projects.
Transit-Oriented Development Planning Program	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 air rights to third parties. All analysis and property disposition would be conducted in accordance with applicable board policy including TOD Policy (Resolution No. R2012-24). This program would provide funding in addition in the ST3 funds assumed for regional equitable TOD strategy.
Light Rail Operations and Maintenance Facilities	Light Rail	This project would construct two new light rail operations and maintenance facilities to accommodate additional fleet 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.
Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility	Bus	This project would construct a new bus operations and maintenance facility to accommodate a portion of the existing and future bus fleet required for ST3 BRT and ST Express bus service. The facility would be located in the vicinity of the I-405/SR 522 corridors.
Light Rail Vehicles	Light Rail	This project would purchase 226 new light rail vehicles required to operate the ST3 light rail system.