



Seattle
Department of
Transportation

TAB Members:

Priyadarshini Balan
Ashwin Bhumbra
Zachary Burton
Dana Coppernoll-Houston
Josh Hirschland
Art Kuniyuki
Sandro Pani
Carolyn Tillinger
Braxton Williams

*The Seattle Transit Advisory Board shall **advise** the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the City **on matters related to transit** and the possible and actual impact of actions taken by the City upon all forms of public transportation.*

*The Board shall be provided the opportunity to comment and make recommendations on City policies, plans, and projects as they may relate to **transit capital improvements, transit mobility, and transit operations** throughout the City...*

*The Board shall help facilitate City policies, plans, and projects that support local and region-wide transit mobility efforts, to help **ensure a functioning and coordinated transit system** throughout the City and region.*

*The Board shall function as the **public oversight committee of revenues collected under Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD) Proposition 1**, as described in Resolution 12 of the STBD...*

The Board shall make an annual report to the City Council on the status of its work program and the achievement of its goals.

**City Council Resolution
31572**

City of Seattle
Seattle Transit Advisory Board

May 22, 2024

Councilmember Dan Strauss
600 Fourth Avenue
2nd Floor
Seattle, WA 98104
Dan.Strauss@seattle.gov

Mayor Bruce Harrell
600 Fourth Avenue
7th Floor
Seattle, WA 98104
Bruce.Harrell@seattle.gov

Dear Mayor Harrell and Councilmember Strauss,

The Transit Advisory Board urges you to, in the May 23rd Sound Transit Board of Directors meeting, **vote to take "No Action"** on the matter of adding new alternatives to the Ballard Link Extension Environmental Impact Statement and maintain the current preferred alternatives.

We make this recommendation for the same reasons various community groups, other Sound Transit board members, and the Sound Transit staff themselves are making this recommendation.

From the May 17th Sound Transit Memo to their Board of Directors: "*The staff recommendation is to take No Action, maintain the current Board-adopted preferred alternative and not carry forward the potential new alternative into environmental review, given the current preferred alternative and the potential new South Lake Union and Denny alternative are reasonably comparable from a technical perspective, but the potential new alternative would delay delivery of the Ballard Link Extension by 10 months to 2 years, would add approximately \$500M to \$1B to the project cost, and would have overall system implications [such as resulting in poorer system connectivity and dramatically lower ridership with no direct connection with the RapidRide E Line and an estimated 3,000 fewer daily riders in the Link system].*"

The new alternatives are proposed in the name of mitigating construction impacts, especially along Westlake Avenue. However, the research shows that Westlake Avenue will only have partial lane

closures for three of the eight years estimated for construction while shifting the SLU station west will result in partial lane closures on 5th Ave for the entirety of eight years of construction. Not only that, Sound Transit's research has shown that the differences of impact to traffic are practically negligible.

A simple question is "do the new alternatives make sense"? From a budgetary standpoint, construction impact standpoint, system design and ridership standpoint, our answer is "NO", with the end result being a SLU station that drastically underserves the neighborhood it is named for.

With construction delays impacting the opening of the full 2 Line, creating a sense of confidence and trust in the Link Light Rail system is essential with the opening of the Ballard Extension. We must not make the same mistakes and we must deliver a system that is constructed on time, on budget, and most importantly, is best designed to serve the riders that use it. We urge you and the rest of the Sound Transit board to please take the recommendation of the Sound Transit staff who understand this project much more comprehensively than any other parties and to not let two years of construction impacts (that, again, will not be dramatically affected by switching to the new alternatives) affect a transit system that will outlive us all.

Thank you,

Seattle Transit Advisory Board