



April 30, 2021

Kent Keel
Chair, Board of Directors
Sound Transit
401 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104-2826

Re: ST3 Realignment

Dear Chair Keel,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Sound Transit's ST3 Realignment. We look forward to a productive conversation on the Sound Transit Board's plans to realign the ST3 Plan.

The Eastside Transportation Association (ETA) is a not-for-profit organization of community members, business members and transportation professionals committed to advocating for congestion relief in the Puget Sound Region. Our goal is to increase mobility, improve our quality of life, and improve our region's economic competitiveness with a world-class transportation system consistent with current and future land use patterns and travel demand.

The ETA encourages the Sound Transit Board to use this realignment process to acknowledge the reality that the region simply cannot afford spending \$100+ Billion for a light rail system. Light rail is only effective in extremely high density exceptionally large urban core cities. Seattle is not one of them. The urban centers of the three county Sound Transit District are not dense enough, by many multiples, to justify light rail. Nor are they forecasted to reach the types of density that make light rail even somewhat practicable. The proof of this is Sound Transit's own ridership projection for light rail in 2040 (with full implementation of the current plan) at less than 2% of the total daily trips in the region.

We encourage the Board to acknowledge this and change course. The light rail system should be terminated at Lynnwood and Federal Way. Furthermore, the West Seattle/Seattle/Ballard lines and the Issaquah/Bellevue/Kirkland lines should be eliminated in favor of enhanced carpools and Bus Rapid Transit systems using 21st Century technology.

The transit system provided by Sound Transit (ST) is an integral part of the regional transportation system. As such, ETA encourages the Board to adopt the following policies:

1. Fully respect the concept of "**Subarea Equity**". Subarea equity has been a foundational principle of ST's agreement with the voters of the region since the Sound Move voter approval in 1996. The original concept was that 'revenue raised in a subarea will be spent for transit service in the subarea'. That concept was revised by the Board when the cost of light rail on the I-90 bridge (located in the North King County subarea) was charged to the East King Subarea. The ST3 ballot

ST3 Realignment, ETA request

issue in 2016 further re-defined subarea equity to mean that ‘the cost of transit service benefiting a subarea will be allocated to the subarea’.

ETA requests that the Sound Transit Board recommit to the original promise of Subarea Equity. The East King Subarea has more than enough unfunded regional transit investments as it is and cannot afford to have our revenues diverted to other subareas.

2. The I-405 Master Plan approved with an FHWA Record of Decision in 2002 included robust **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)** in the corridor as an integral part of the multi-modal Master Plan. ST3 includes a reduced version of the Master Plan vision of BRT, now branded as STRIDE, for implementation by 2024, which is 4-10 years later than envisioned in 2002. STRIDE is the ST Board’s version of high capacity regional transit for the East King Subarea.

ETA requests that the STRIDE program be kept intact for implementation in 2024.

3. The extremely costly, low ridership **South Kirkland to Issaquah Extension** for light rail programmed for construction in 2035-2040 and operational in 2040 is a prime candidate for realignment.

ETA requests that the South Kirkland to Issaquah Extension be replaced with appropriate BRT infrastructure for additional STRIDE implementation along the I-405/SR-520/I-90 corridors. Revenues planned for this light rail route should instead be invested in critical direct connector ramps at the I-405/SR 520 and I-405/I-90 interchanges, and other BRT specific projects (like Park & Ride lots), included in the I-405 Master Plan and in the Puget Sound Regional Council’s regionally adopted Transportation 2040 Plan.

4. One of the known principles of an effective transit system is to provide adequate suburban vehicle parking in the form of Park and Ride lots. The 200 stall **North Sammamish Park and Ride** facility is an excellent example of how park and rides extend the service area of the bus transit system.

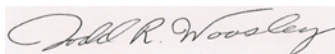
ETA requests that this facility be considered for acceleration in implementation and not for delay nor elimination from the ST3 program.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.


Very Truly Yours,



Bob Pishue
Chair,
Eastside Transportation
Association



Todd Woosley
Chair,
Eastside Transportation
Association



Vic Bishop
Legislative Chair
Eastside Transportation
Association

Cc: Peter Rogoff, Sound Transit CEO