

January 25, 2023

*By email*

Hon. Dow Constantine, Chair, and Members of the Board  
Julie Timm, CEO  
Sound Transit  
401 S. Jackson Street  
Seattle, WA 98014

RE: Joint comments on Resolution No. R2023-06

Dear Chair Constantine, Members of the Board, and CEO Timm,

Across the region and without exception, our communities are eager and ready for light rail service to start. Significant delays to anticipated Link extension openings caused by the I-90 plinth failures, concrete strike, and COVID-19 require Sound Transit – and the community – to rethink expectations. We must work together to identify the best solutions to mitigate delays systemwide and deliver service as quickly as possible.

Consistent with discussion at the January 12<sup>th</sup> System Expansion Committee meeting, we encourage the Sound Transit Board to consider the following:

**Authorize work now to maintain the East Link Starter Line option as part of a two-step approach:** The Board should authorize up to \$6 million from the East King subarea for work to continue exploring options related to the East Link Starter Line, including the Title VI and Fare Equity analysis. We urge you to take this action so time and momentum is not lost. Only after this work is complete should the Board consider the second action of authorizing the East Link Starter Line.

**Identify options to improve frequency and service to the Link 1 Line:** Until the full East Link alignment opens allowing access to the Operations and Maintenance Facility East, service on the 1 Line to Lynnwood will fall far short of the anticipated demand. It is critical that Sound Transit be innovative and creative in where and how to store and maintain trains to increase 1 Line service levels. Balancing the benefits of revised sequencing and service delivery across the region will not be easy, but we are confident that staff can provide the information needed for the Board to make these decisions by Fall.

**Develop policy guidelines:** Recent project delays have created a unique decision-making environment for the Board. Calls for a policy that gives guidance to when and how the agency can consider future phased openings are timely given the ST2 and ST3 projects still ahead. Transparent policy guidelines will help ensure Sound Transit delivers the most transit service to the public as fast as is feasible. We urge such a policy or policies be developed and adopted.

Don't stop this important work! We urge authorization of the necessary funds at the January 26<sup>th</sup> Board meeting to continue to explore creative solutions to the current situation. While the recent system delays are a major disappointment, we applaud Sound Transit's willingness to use this as an opportunity to look for benefits systemwide as mitigation options are adopted.

Thank you for your efforts to expand reliable and safe transit service options throughout the region as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Hon. Angela Birney, Mayor  
City of Redmond



Hon. Lynne Robinson, Mayor  
City of Bellevue



Hon. Penny Sweet, Mayor  
City of Kirkland



Jeff Tomlin, MD, CEO  
EvergreenHealth



Geoff Crump, COO  
Hopelink



Kelli Refer, Executive Director  
Move Redmond



Kim Sarnecki, CEO  
Together Center



Joe Fain, President and CEO  
Bellevue Chamber of  
Commerce



Patrick Bannon, President  
Bellevue Downtown Association



Kristina Hudson, CEO  
OneRedmond



Guy Palumbo, Director  
Public Policy, Amazon



Sara Lazkani, Public Policy  
Manager, State and Local, Meta



Barb Wilson, Puget Sound  
Local Government Affairs,  
Corporate, External, and Legal  
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Trinity Parker, Senior Vice  
President, Chief Marketing  
Officer, Marketing,  
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**Ian M. Goodhew**

Ian Goodhew, Associate VP  
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Gregory K. Johnson, CEO  
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Runstad & Company