

August 1, 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: Support for 2024 Service Plan Proposal

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

Hosting mega events, such as the All-Star Game and Taylor Swift concerts, is a timely reminder of how light rail is transforming our region. Every day, riders rely on the existing light rail system to get to work, the airport, school, shopping, health care, and other needs. We are excited that the 2024 Service Plan Proposal continues to make light rail more accessible to the Eastside with the East Link Starter Line (ELSL) and to Snohomish County with the Lynnwood Link Extension (LLE). **We urge opening both lines in 2024, as supported by the 2024 Service Plan proposal and corresponding equity analysis.**

Previously, Eastside stakeholders expressed support for the ELSL in letters sent October 2022 and January 2023, and provided details of why the Starter Line makes sense for our communities. Thank you for listening and conducting a thorough feasibility analysis.

We represent interests that span King and Snohomish counties. Together, the ELSL and LLE will provide foundational regional connectivity: LLE as a critical expansion of I-5 corridor functionality and ELSL as an important interim measure to provide light rail benefits to the Eastside.

Sound Transit staff identified benefits that make ELSL a valuable addition to the network as it introduces light rail to the Eastside. Opening over six miles of track and eight stations will allow for testing of equipment and operations, earlier use of new vehicles and the Operations and Maintenance Facilities East for revenue service, and it activates idle facilities for safety and efficiency.

The ELSL will help build ridership for the full East Link line, from downtown Seattle to downtown Redmond, enhancing transit access, speed, and reliability. We appreciate the work by King County Metro and Sound Transit on the East Link Connections process to plan a coordinated structure on the Eastside once East Link and Downtown Redmond Link Extensions are fully opened.

Across the Eastside growth is not only coming; it is here. To support the tremendous population and job growth our communities are experiencing, Transit Oriented Developments (TODs) are being built along the ELSL providing much needed housing in anticipation of the light rail expansion. This is the result of decades-long thoughtful local, regional, and state planning around station areas. Affordable housing development in the Overlake and Spring District areas is currently underway. However, TOD does not work without transit, and we will not be able to fully realize the benefits of TOD until service begins.

Adopting the 2024 Service Plan proposal is the right next step in realizing the vision of a regional light rail network that voters have approved again and again. Opening the Lynnwood Link Expansion and the East Link Starter Line in 2024 represents a major step for the region.

We thank you for the significant work it has taken to bring this decision to this point and offer our continued support as we move forward together.

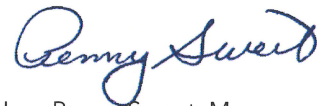
Respectfully,



Hon. Angela Birney, Mayor
City of Redmond



Hon. Lynne Robinson, Mayor
City of Bellevue



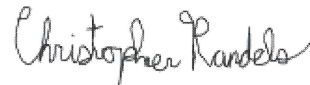
Hon. Penny Sweet, Mayor
City of Kirkland



Tim Motts, President & CEO
Boys & Girls Clubs of Bellevue



Angie Hinojos, Executive
Director
Centro Cultural Mexicano



Christopher Randels, Director
Complete Streets Bellevue



Katherine Hollis, Executive
Director
Eastrail Partners



Debbie Lacy,
Founder/Executive Director
Eastside for All



Geoff Crump, COO
Hopelink



Kelli Refer, Executive Director
Move Redmond



Kim Sarnecki, CEO
Together Center



Kelsey Mesher, Executive
Director
Transportation Choices
Coalition



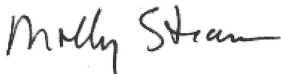
Hugh Ewart, Senior Director,
State & Fed Govt Affairs
Seattle Children's



Jeff Tomlin, MD, CEO
EvergreenHealth



Alice L. Chao, Senior Director
of Operations
Kaiser Permanente



Molly Stearns, Chief
Development Officer
Overlake Medical Center and
Clinics



Ian Goodhew, Sr. Director of
External Affairs, Associate VP
UW Medicine



Joe Fain, President and CEO
Bellevue Chamber of
Commerce



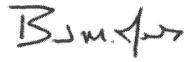
Patrick Bannon, President
Bellevue Downtown
Association



Tim Carr, CEO
Meydenbauer Center



Kristina Hudson, CEO
OneRedmond



Brad Jones, Executive Director
Visit Bellevue



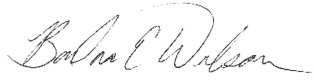
Guy Palumbo, Director, Public
Policy
Amazon



David Namura, Govt Affairs and
Public Policy Manager
Google



Stephen Uy, Head of Public
Policy, Northwest | State Policy
Meta



Barb Wilson, Puget Sound
Local Government Affairs,
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Ada Healey, Chief Real Estate
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Gregory K. Johnson, CEO, The
Spring District / Wright Runstad
& Company