January 19, 2016

Sound Transit Board
c/o Board Administrator
Sound Transit
401 S. Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104

Re: Eastside cities' joint ST3 candidate projects comment letter

Dear Chair Constantine and Members of the Board,

The cities of Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond, Renton and Bothell appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the candidate projects under consideration for inclusion in the Sound Transit 3 (ST3) System Plan. The following shared comments reflect the interests stated in the "ST3 System Plan Joint Interest Statement" submitted to the Board on July 14, 2015, and are in addition to the city-specific comment letters that may be provided to Sound Transit by January 21, 2016.

The Eastside is a vital and growing area, and an integral component of the regional economic engine. Eastside cities are projected to reach nearly 700,000 regional residents and more than 550,000 jobs by 2040. Our cities are interconnected both geographically and economically, and have many common interests and goals. We are boldly reshaping our regional growth centers and downtowns into dense, mixed-use, urban centers that need frequent and reliable transit service to sustain economic growth and viability.

ST3 has the potential to create transit connections within the Eastside, and provide connections between the Eastside and the rest of the region. For ST3 to be successful on the Eastside, the Board must invest in projects that effectively meet the travel demands of both our current communities and those of the future.

It is imperative that the ST3 System Plan address the Eastside transit network in a comprehensive fashion to serve the substantial expected growth, and to maintain the principles of subarea equity as defined in ST2. Should ST3 be approved by the voters, the Eastside will be making a significant tax investment into the package, and we look forward to seeing specific details about the Eastside projects in step with these funds. ~~Given the substantial tax investment into ST3 from the Eastside, W~~we request the Board fully fund the following projects, and related project adjustments early in the ST3 System Plan:

- **E-01:** Complete the East Link spine to Downtown Redmond.
- **E-02:** Fully implement Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on I-405, from Lynnwood to SeaTac. Adjust the scope of the proposed low intensive capital project to provide sufficient access for the line to operate as an efficient BRT facility; the project components necessary to function as BRT and maximize service and ridership include:
    - Access improvements including, but not limited to, additional inline stations at NE 85th Street, relocation of the North 8th Street HOV direct access ramp in Renton as

discussed under project E-04, direct access to the Tukwila Sounder Station, and at least one additional location south of I-90;
- o Expanded park-and-ride facilities;
- o Dedicated transitway with inline flyer stops;
- o Vehicles with multiple doors for entry/exit, designed to "dock" with stations to eliminate a step-up onto the bus;
- o Off-board fare collection;
- o Frequent, all day service, with intuitive maps and simple schedules;
- o Transit signal priority where applicable for faster, more efficient service; and
- o Sophisticated communication systems to track vehicle locations and provide arrival information directly to passenger cell phones or other kiosk displays.

- **E-03:** Light rail from Totem Lake to Issaquah via Bellevue to connect these three regional growth centers with fast, frequent and reliable transit service. The scope for this project should must provide flexibility in Segment A (Totem Lake to Bellevue) to allow for alternative any High Capacity Transit alternatives available to Sound Transit, so that the Kirkland community can determine which mode best serves Kirkland's needs. The HCT infrastructure must also enable joint use by transit providers. considerations on the Eastside Rail Corridor in Segment A from Totem Lake to Bellevue, if desired by the community.

- **E-04:** In lieu of the proposed North 8th Street HOV direct access ramps in Renton, provide a new transit center and parking garage at Rainier Avenue South and South Grady Way.

- **N-09 and N-10:** Build BRT on 145th Street and SR 522 to connect with North Link, in accordance with the plans of the local jurisdictions through which it passes, to provide HCT between the Eastside, including the University of Washington Bothell/Cascadia College Campus, and the greater Seattle area via the north end of Lake Washington.

In addition to the above projects, we urge Sound Transit to provide detailed information about investment plans for enhanced and expanded Regional Express Service (REX) between Eastside cities and the region. These investments should include adding service to overcrowded and high ridership routes, and implement capital investments that improve the quality of these services and the rider experience.

We also look forward to an in depth discussion about ST3 plans for non-motorized station access improvements, such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and leveraging transit oriented development opportunities.

The regional infrastructure investment represented in a potential ST3 package presents an extraordinary opportunity to synchronize plans from multiple agencies to achieve important regional growth, transportation and environmental policy goals. It is critical that we work in unison to address the important ties between land use and transportation in the early planning phases of the ST3 System Plan to realize the maximum potential of this regional investment. An effective transit system will also seamlessly integrate REX, BRT, light rail and local bus service. We look forward to seeing work products that demonstrate integration between Sound Transit and King County Metro planning efforts.

Thank you for considering our comments as we plan for our region's future mobility. The projects in the final package presented to voters should be in step with local and regional plans. We welcome close coordination with Sound Transit as the ST3 System Plan continues to develop.

Sincerely,

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