ATTACHMENT A

September 24, 2020

Sound Transit Board
401 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: Near-Term Actions for the I-405 Bus Rapid Transit Project

Dear Chair Keel and Members of the Board:

The cities of Bellevue, Bothell, Duvall, Lynnwood, and Tukwila and Representative Davina Duerr, 1st Legislative District, appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the Board's decision to advance the I-405 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Fast, frequent transit service is a priority for cities, residents, and businesses along the I-405 corridor. The Board should approve the Preliminary Engineering and General Engineering contracts, the NE 85th Street funding agreement with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and the Design Build Project Management consultant contract for the BRT bus base in Bothell.

I-405 BRT has been a priority for communities along the corridor since WSDOT's I-405 Master Plan was finalized in 2002. The Plan was the result of unprecedented cooperation between the cities, legislative leaders and transit agencies in the I-405 corridor. The strength of our region's economy depends upon a multimodal transportation system that reliably moves people and goods within and between job centers. This will become increasingly important as the region recovers from the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There has been great progress in developing I-405 BRT and the project should not lose momentum now. Last year, the State Legislature authorized WSDOT to issue toll-backed bonds to fund improvements to I-405 and SR 167. With improved I-405 express toll lanes, Sound Transit estimates that BRT travel times between Lynnwood and Bellevue will be further reduced. It is critical that Sound Transit, WSDOT, and project stakeholders move the project forward, looking for more opportunities to save money and deliver a higher-quality transit service.

We urge Sound Transit to continue to make I-405 BRT a priority. Sound Transit staff has indicated that the NE 85th Street Interchange funding agreement with WSDOT can be delayed until July without undue delays to the I-405 BRT project. However; we anticipate that the Legislature will reexamine the state's transportation funding commitments and major project schedules in 2021. WSDOT's I-405 north end improvements and I-405 BRT are interdependent, and it is critical that both projects remain on a priority schedule.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Board's near-term funding decisions. I-405 BRT is the Eastside's "light rail." We urge you to advance this project to reinforce Sound Transit's commitment to

the Eastside and the region. We look forward to continued partnership with Sound Transit, WSDOT, and project stakeholders to keep the I-405 BRT project on schedule.

Sincerely,



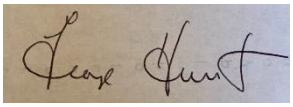
Lynne Robinson
Mayor, City of Bellevue



Liam Olsen
Mayor, City of Bothell



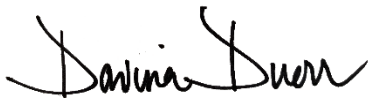
Amy Ockerlander
Mayor, City of Duvall



George Hurst
Councilmember and Representative to the I-405 BRT Elected Leadership Group, City of Lynnwood



Allan Ekberg
Mayor, City of Tukwila



Representative Davina Duerr
1st Legislative District