



Rob Gannon, General Manager
King County Metro Transit
King Street Center, KSC-TR-0415
201 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104-3836

July 7, 2017

Dear Mr. Gannon:

As mayors of cities in North and East King County, we are very concerned about the proposal to restructure Metro and Sound Transit service on SR 520 by diverting passengers to transfer at the Montlake Hub in 2019. The proposed diversion significantly degrades the passenger experience by adding a 20 minute transfer requiring crossing major streets, waiting additional time for transit connections, and exposing riders directly to weather conditions without refuge. The impact of these barriers are most significant for people with disabilities, mobility impairments, or who are traveling with children.

Currently, transfers between SR 520 buses and light rail are inconvenient, cumbersome and take too long. Westbound passengers must cross Montlake Boulevard, a heavily trafficked road, to get to light rail, while eastbound passengers must cross Montlake Boulevard and Pacific Street to get to bus service. Passengers can walk out of their way to an uncovered pedestrian-bicycle bridge to avoid crossing Montlake Boulevard, but must still cross Pacific Street.

We understand the restructure proposal is in response to the significant transportation and development projects in downtown Seattle over the next five years that will decrease mobility in the area. The benefit of reducing the number of buses traveling through downtown Seattle and maximizing light rail use is clear. However, increasing commute times by 20 minutes while creating more mobility downtown will only incentivize single occupancy vehicles to drive to downtown Seattle rather than stick with public transportation.

We support the goals of increasing the use of public transit and reducing congestion. To accomplish these outcomes, Metro and Sound Transit must implement a package of capital and program improvements that dramatically improves the bus-light rail transfer experience before implementing service changes that would require a transfer at the Montlake Hub, including:

- Re-locate bus stops adjacent to the light rail station and not require passengers to cross major streets or use an uncovered pedestrian-bicycle bridge that adds additional time to the transfer trip.
- Ensure that transit service can move to and through the Montlake Hub, a highly congested area today. The addition of upwards of 40 buses an hour to the Montlake Hub will not only result in more congestion, but could eliminate what little mobility there is in this area.

We are very concerned that the current restructure proposal, which is designed to improve mobility in downtown Seattle, will worsen mobility in the Montlake Hub. Furthermore, Eastside bus riders should not bear the burden of longer commutes for improved mobility in downtown Seattle. Improved mobility is needed in both of these areas; it is unacceptable to intentionally improve mobility in one area at the expense of the other.

Metro, Sound Transit, the City of Seattle, University of Washington, and Washington State Department of Transportation must work together to identify, design, and implement the right package of Montlake Hub improvements before implementing any SR 520 service restructure that involves a bus light-rail transfer. We are willing to work with you in this endeavor, and believe it is inevitable that this transfer environment be improved so that it will efficiently facilitate bus-light rail transfers and maximum use of the light rail transit investment made by the region.

Sincerely,

John Stokes



Mayor
City of Bellevue

Andrew Rheume



Mayor
City of Bothell

David Baker



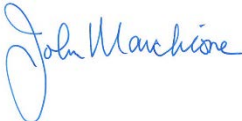
Mayor
City of Kenmore

Amy Walen



Mayor
City of Kirkland

John Marchione



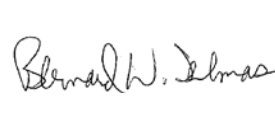
Mayor
City of Redmond

Chris Roberts



Mayor
City of Shoreline

Bernie Talmas



Mayor
City of Woodinville

cc: Peter Rogoff, Sound Transit CEO
King County Executive Dow Constantine
King County Councilmember Rod Dembowski, Transportation, Economy and Environment
Committee Chair
King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci, Regional Transit Committee Chair
Seattle Mayor Ed Murray
Seattle City Councilman Rob Johnson
University of Washington President Ana Mari Cauce
Secretary of Transportation Roger Millar, Washington State Department of Transportation