



Magnolia Community Council

MAGNOLIA'S COMMUNITY COUNCIL

September 23, 2018

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Janis Traven

Sound Transit 3 Study

Email: soundtransit3@soundtransit.org

Sound Transit Board

Email: emailtheboard@soundtransit.org

Email: boardadministration@soundtransit.org

Jenny Durkan, Mayor, City of Seattle

Email: jenny.durkan@seattle.gov

Seattle City Council

Email: teresa.mosqueda@seattle.gov

Email: lorena.gonzalez@seattle.gov

Email: sally.bagshaw@seattle.gov

Email: mike.obrien@seattle.gov

Email: lisa.herbold@seattle.gov

Email: bruce.harrell@seattle.gov

Email: kshama.sawant@seattle.gov

Email: rob.johnson@seattle.gov

Email: debora.juarez@seattle.gov

Jeanne Kohl-Welles, King County Councilmember, District 4

Email: Jeanne.kohl-welles.kingcounty.gov

Sen. Reuven Carlyle, 36th Legislative District

Email: reuven.carlyle@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Gael Tarleton, 36th Legislative District

Email: gael.tarleton@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Noel Frame, 36th Legislative District

Email: noel.frame@leg.wa.gov

Re: Sound Transit 3 - Ballard to Downtown Preferred Alternative – Level 2

Dear Sound Transit Staff, Elected Officials:

The Magnolia Community Council (MCC) has reviewed the Level 2 Analysis work completed by Sound Transit for the Ballard to Downtown Preferred Alternative. The purpose of

this letter is to give our shared input regarding the best outcomes for Sound Transit's Light Rail alignment between Downtown and Ballard. The MCC has represented the interests of residents of the Magnolia neighborhood since 1924, and the MCC has provided input on the planning process for Sound Transit 3 Light Rail between Ballard and Downtown Seattle since it began, in earnest, in 2015.

The MCC has a clear interest in the route where it most directly affects our community between the Tunnel Portal to the Elliott Avenue Corridor and the Salmon Bay crossing that will connect Magnolia with Ballard.

The MCC's first goal is maximizing our return on investment, and we use only one question to measure this: what is the most reliable route that minimizes the total travel time of Magnolia's future riders, especially those future riders travelling by bus-and-rail at peak times in peak directions that are already most congested?

The MCC has long recognized that additional transit capacity is needed to serve residents and businesses in Magnolia, Interbay, Ballard, Terminal 91, Salmon Bay, Fishermen's Terminal, and other areas northwest of Downtown Seattle that rely on the overcrowded 15th Avenue West Corridor. Our goals are the following: reliability; enhancing the carrying capacity of people and freight on the 15th Avenue West Corridor; minimizing the impacts of construction on the same extremely congested corridor to transit, freight and vehicular movement; station access from Magnolia and transit-integration with Magnolia's bus routes; and future expandability to both the north and east from Ballard so Magnolians' may have better access to destinations like Northgate Mall and the University of Washington in the future.

Queen Anne Tunnel Portal to Smith Cove

The MCC wants the crossing of Elliott Avenue to be achieved in a single crossing, with as minimal impact as possible, while serving the Expedia campus and the Cruise Passengers as best as possible. Two proposed stations achieve these goals: one is located west of Elliott Avenue just north of the Helix Bridge; the other is located west of Elliott Avenue between the fly-over used to access Expedia's Campus and the Magnolia Bridge.

The MCC does not support the Smith Cove station as a major bus integration point for buses from Magnolia. Instead, the Dravus Street Station in Interbay should be planned as the bus-rail integration point for Magnolia bus routes.

Smith Cove to Interbay

Our goal for this portion of the route is to maintain options for transit, freight and vehicular access to Magnolia with a future, new access bridge. This precludes the use of Amory Way for light rail and we request you remove this option from future study.

From our Preferred Smith Cove Stations, both the routes that closely follow within feet of the BNSF railroad tracks, either on the west or the east boundary of the BNSF railroad, appear to be very efficient and minimize negative impacts.

Interbay

This station will serve Magnolia and may also serve Seattle Pacific University well with the proper bus route connections. Our primary goal is to reduce all negative impacts of the new

transit infrastructure while maximizing our investment, as defined above. Therefore, the absolute best access is provided by the 20th Avenue West station location, which also allows for a tunnel to Ballard that in turn best allows future expansion from Ballard.

The MCC recognizes that the station location at Thorndyke Ave W also allows for a tunnel to Ballard that best fosters future expansion from Ballard. This Thorndyke Ave W station should be relocated south, as close as possible to Dravus Street, and would require an entrance on the South side of West Dravus street so pedestrians could easily access the station and decrease their total commute time without interacting with heavily-trafficed Dravus St. This station should be designed as close to the BNSF railroad tracks as possible to reduce negative impacts on the fledgling Interbay Triangle neighborhood.

No matter the decision between these two station locations in Interbay, the MCC requests that Sound Transit rebuild the Dravus Street overpass of the BNSF railroad tracks. This bridge is deteriorating and will need to serve transit, bikes, pedestrians, and vehicles for decades to come.

The MCC strongly opposes the alignments that would require construction of stations at 15th or 16th Avenues West and build guideway anywhere near 15th Avenue West. The two station proposals that do this, including the representative project alignment, should be removed from consideration.

The MCC also requests that all bus routes have routing options planned so bus routes from Magnolia will serve the Interbay station, especially in the event of the loss of the use of the Magnolia Bridge. Future bus-and-rail commutes must be planned for in such a way that commuters' travel times are minimized.

Salmon Bay Crossing

The MCC has three goals with respect to the Salmon Bay Crossing, reliability, future expandability, and minimizing negative impacts. All Tunnel to Ballard options are by far the best as they do not impact the maritime industries that are Magnolians neighbors and employers, they provide easy future expandability and would be the most reliable.

Drawbridges are unacceptable and should be removed from consideration.

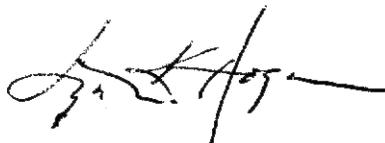
Ballard

The MCC recognizes most destinations in Ballard for Magnolians are likely to remain west of 15th Avenue NW even in the decades to come. This fact should be considered in the planning of the Ballard Station. Additional details we defer to Ballard community organizations and Ballard community members to provide.

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We appreciate the work of the Sound Transit on the Sound Transit 3 - Ballard to Downtown Preferred Alternative Study thus far. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn Hogan".

Lynn Hogan
Vice President, Magnolia Community Council

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ben Broesamle".

Ben Broesamle
Transportation Chair, Magnolia Community Council