

January 4, 2023

via *Electronic Mail* (emailtheboard@soundtransit.org)

Dear Sound Transit Board,

In review of the Sound Transit Workshop #3 held on December 15th, we are disappointed and alarmed by the PowerPoint presentation and discussion, specifically; the lack of inclusion of the Park Lid idea that has a great deal of support by the Chinatown-International District community. Despite repeated requests during Workshops 1 and 2, Sound Transit still has not provided a depiction nor any indication that such a study is in progress.

Workshop 3 merely offered three alternatives with obvious drawbacks:

- 4th Avenue Shallow: significant traffic congestion pushing nearly 30,000 vehicles to detour through the Chinatown neighborhood
- South of the CID: no connection to SeaTac Airport from current CID station
- North of the CID: no connection to SeaTac Airport from current CID station

Eliminating access from the current CID station to the airport for Seattle's largest minority area and travelers from the Eastside, is inequitable and **unacceptable**.

In the most recent workshop, community members requiring interpretation were shepherded into a different room and excluded from the general discussion, creating a clear inequity in communication. Community feedback provided to Sound Transit staff has been similarly dismissed, including Park Lid concept, First Hill Loop, and Shallower Shallow 4th.

Sound Transit's own Racial Equity Tool directs:

- "...prioritizing leadership of and solutions from people and communities most closely affected by the issues and injustices we seek to change" (p. 12). **Note:** community leadership contributions and solutions are brushed aside
- "Performance Accountability/Outcomes: What are the performance measures?" (p. 15) **Note:** these have not been established
- "Equitable Engagement: ...purpose of establishing trust and building authentic relationships over time" (p. 16). **Note:** top-down management style does not allow meaningful discussion, consideration of community ideas, solutions
- "...co-creation and community-led decision making as of [sic] way to combat power imbalances that exist between 'traditional' authorities and the communities who face inequities" (p. 16 last paragraph). **Note:** community decisions on alternatives are overturned or dismissed without study or analysis, i.e., idea of Shallower Shallow on 4th or Park Lid).

- “Be accountable to community and take responsibility....” (p. 17, Relationship Building, bullet 5). **Note:** to be accountable is acting meaningfully on community input and feedback; i.e. there was no follow up feedback meeting after Workshop 3
- “...collaborative innovation where ideas are shared and improved together through all stages of a process.... What types of things can Sound Transit do....? Problem solving on a variety of issues....” (p. 17-18). **Note:** sharing, improving or problem solving cannot occur if concepts and ideas do not progress past a superficial sketch on paper, to the data and analysis stage.
- “Racial equity is not possible without accountability that is in alignment with data and community feedback” (p. 20 Accountability and Report Out Section). **Note:** Sound Transit staff is in need of training regarding racial equity and accountability

The Sound Transit 2021 Annual Report Office of Civil Rights, Equity, & Inclusion emphasizes “meaningful” engagement, collaboration and problem solving. **This has not been done.** Efforts to “engage” are for appearances’ sake and checking off a RET box; scripted workshops with limited discussions, sketches of ideas Sound Transit staff are not interested in compared to fully developed and analyzed versions the community is being steered towards, instead.

Due to such egregious issues in community engagement, Sound Transit should delay a decision for at least three months to further study and provide data and analysis, including costs of the Park Lid concept and the Shallower Shallow 4th Avenue--while at the same time, engage in collaborative partnerships with impacted partners and community, to meaningfully share ideas and solve problems together through all stages of a process, as called for by the Sound Transit Racial Equity Tool.

This visionary Chinatown-International District station project is to live on for one hundred years. Once complete, it will connect multiple communities and serve as a regional transit hub with direct transfers for light rail, Sounder commuter rail, Amtrak long-distance rail, and many other transit modes. An additional three months to ensure it is planned and executed properly, with thoughtful intention, in partnership with our community for such a long-lived legacy, is not too much to ask.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

sent without signature to avoid delay

Betty Lau and Brien Chow
Co-founders, Transit Equity for All

cc: Julie Timm, Sound Transit Chief Executive Officer
King County Council
Mayor Bruce Harrell
Deputy Mayor Greg Wong
Deputy Mayor Monisha Harrell
Marshall Foster, Office of Waterfront and Civics Projects
Seattle City Council
Seattle City Councilmember Dan Strauss, Seattle Land Use Committee Chair
Seattle City Councilmember Tammy Morales, Seattle Land Use Committee Vice Chair
Seattle City Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda, Seattle Land Use Committee Member
Seattle City Councilmember Alex Pedersen, Seattle Land Use Committee Member
Seattle City Councilmember Sara Nelson, Seattle Land Use Committee Member
Office of Planning & Community Development
Seattle Department of Transportation
Office of Economic Development
International Special Review District
Department of Neighborhoods

Community:

Chong Wa Benevolent Association Board & Honorary Advisory Board
Chinese Information and Service Center
Chinatown-International District Business Improvement Area
Friends of Japanese American Museum of Seattle
Friends of Japantown
Wing Luke Museum
Interim Community Development Association
Seattle Chinatown-International District Preservation and Development Authority
International Community Health Services
Friends of Little Saigon
Historic South Downtown
Summit Sierra
Denise Louie Education Center
Seattle Indian Health Board
Uwajimaya
Theatre Off Jackson
United Chinese Americans
OCA- Greater Seattle Chapter
Asian Pacific Islander Coalition Advocating Together for Health
Friends of Seattle CID
Beth Ku
Inscape Arts and Cultural Center
Washington Trust for Historic Preservation
Seattle Subway
Chinatown-International District Vision Group

Congressional Delegation

Representative Adam Smith Outreach Director

Representative Pramila Jayapal

Senator Patty Murray's Office

Media

Seattle Times

Northwest Asian Weekly

The Urbanist

South Seattle Emerald

Publicola

Crosscut

International Examiner

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