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Date: July 2, 2018

To: Rachel Miller

Subject: U District Station Area Mobility Plan

Thank you to the University District Mobility Group for attending the April 2018 Seattle Transit Advisory Board (TAB) meeting and presenting on their efforts to develop a vision for the future of the University District station area. We're very grateful to all the volunteer work you have put into developing visions for the future of the U-District after the opening of the Link light rail station at 43rd and Brooklyn Ave NE. We agree that this is an opportunity to re-think walking, biking, and transit in a very vibrant neighborhood. We hope that in the future, that this kind of deeply thoughtful and community-centric design process will be used for all Link stations and conducted during the station design process. Following the presentation, the board has the following comments on the common elements and individual scenarios in the plan.

Common Elements:

Overall, we are in broad agreement with the common elements presented in the vision for the U-District. We do have a specific concern that the current Sound Transit station area plan has bike lanes along Brooklyn Ave in front of the station on the same level with pedestrian sidewalks and not separated by any non-visual element. We believe this will put pedestrians with vision impairments in serious danger, and that mixing bicycle and pedestrian traffic like this is generally not a good idea. Perhaps, bollards or a small curb could help blind individuals locate the boundary of this lane and serve as a guideway separating out cyclists riding past the station from pedestrians entering and exiting.

We agree with the Mobility Plan that increasing sidewalk widths at and around the station to handle increased pedestrian volumes at and around the station and along University Ave beyond the current planned 10' to 12' widths is warranted. In addition, we encourage all agencies and groups involved to think about sidewalk capacity north of 45th St along Brooklyn as well as to the west of the station along 43rd to the 11th and Roosevelt couplet.

*The Seattle Transit Advisory Board shall **advise** the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the City **on matters related to transit** and the possible and actual impact of actions by the City upon all forms of public transportation.*

*The Board shall be provided the opportunity to comment and make recommendations on City policies, plans, and projects as they may relate to **transit capital improvements, transit mobility, and transit operations** throughout the City...*

*The Board shall help facilitate City policies, plans, and projects that support local and region-wide transit mobility efforts, to help **ensure a functioning and coordinated transit system** throughout the City and region.*

*The Board shall function as the **public oversight committee of revenues collected under Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD) Proposition 1**, as described in Resolution 12 of the STBD...*

The Board shall make an annual report to the City Council on the status of its work program and the achievement of its goals.

*City Council Resolution
31572*

Station Area Scenarios & Transit:

We agree with the Mobility Plan that buses should drop passengers off near to Link station as well as to other destinations including the shops on the Ave and the UW campus. While we did bring up the possibility of moving all north-south local service onto 15th Ave, we feel this would put many riders too far from the Link station. However, directly serving the station by running buses on Brooklyn would put riders too far from the UW. In addition, this would require a major re-build of Brooklyn from the as-permitted design. Metro has already determined the current design unfriendly for transit and we do not want to delay opening the station to re-permit a design like in Scenario 2. We also generally believe transit lines should run with as few turns as possible and that both Scenario 2 and 3 would introduce more turns into the north-south routing as buses continuing north from the station and out of the U-district. We believe that University Ave is the best local transit pathway as it serves both Link and the UW well and avoids bends in routing.

We encourage the U-District Mobility Group to consider a modified Scenario 1 that turns The Ave into a transit and pedestrian mall similar to Granville Street in Vancouver, BC. This would allow the removal of parking from The Ave and create wider sidewalks. Further, turning 43rd (and perhaps 42nd St) into a pedestrian mall is also appealing and would provide plazas for cafes and street life. With peak bus traffic of 25-50 vehicles per hour, we believe that the Ave would be much more pedestrian friendly, and with the introduction of battery-electric buses at or before 2030 the noise and exhaust from buses would be not much more than that of current model light truck.

Sincerely,

Seattle Transit Advisory Board