



Seattle
Department of
Transportation

TAB Members:

Priyadharshini Balan
Deborah Barnard
Ashwin Bhumbala
Zachary Burton
Shirley Chu
Dana Coppernoll-Houston
Katie Freeman
Dexter Jenkins
Art Kuniyuki
Sandro Pani
Kyler Parris
Carolyn Tillinger

*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 taken 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**

City of Seattle
Seattle Transit Advisory Board

October 24, 2024

To: Mayor Bruce Harrell and Seattle City Councilmembers

Re: 2025-2026 Proposed Seattle Transit Measure (STM) Budget, TAB Feedback

Dear Seattle Mayor's Office and City Councilmembers,

"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 taken by the City upon all forms of public transportation."

This mandate for the Seattle Transit Advisory Board (TAB) is something we take seriously as we represent voters who passed the Seattle Transit Measure. The TAB functions "**as the public oversight committee of revenues collected under Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD) Proposition 1**".

The TAB must respond to the significant scope change involving STM funds that were not discussed with the TAB. We were not made aware of the lifting of a City Council-passed \$12M Bridge Proviso and using a \$1.5M unspent balance that SDOT will not be able to expense out in the 2025-2026 period.

Although the TAB serves as the public oversight committee of revenues for the STM, we were not informed nor advised before any publication of the Mayor's 2025-2026 Budget. The TAB should have been informed before the budget publication that the Bridge Proviso is proposed to be lifted. It also should have been notified that surplus revenues in other programs, like Emerging Needs, would be combined with the City's Payroll Expense Tax monies to finance the staffing of ST3 personnel within the City of Seattle's departments. (\$5.2M in total for 2025, \$6.8M for 2026).

While the TAB fully supports drawing down revenues as the expiry year of 2026 approaches, we cannot provide oversight of the revenues, as mandated, if we are not fully informed of choices for those funds without our input or notification before any public announcement is made.

The TAB will not ask for the lifting of the Bridge Proviso to be reversed and the monies expensed elsewhere. We understand that the City Council may vote on a proviso on STM revenues. Also understood is that SDOT then must find ways to expense those funds. And, subject to the Council's final approval of said budget, we understand that the Mayor's office may lift a council-approved proviso and repurpose the funds.

Instead, per our mandate as the oversight committee for STM revenues, the TAB makes the following recommendations:

1. These funds will be under the City's control, not associated with STM, and not subject to our oversight. We ask that the Mayor's office and SDOT update the TAB semi-annually or annually regarding the distribution of the former STM revenues, and confirm with the TAB that the revenues are being repurposed solely to increase ST3 staffing within the City of Seattle departments.
2. In the future, the TAB needs to be consulted at least (1) month in advance of lifting any revenue usage of STM monies outside of the STM programs and services offered through the end of 2026. This advance notice allows for the TAB to meet and provide comments and recommendations. We can accept the movement of revenues within STM programs and services with City Council amendments or provisos, but transferring funds outside of STM programs and services requires approval of the TAB.

Thank you for listening to us. The Seattle Transit Advisory Board is happy to provide further clarification or discussion.

Sincerely yours,

The Seattle Transit Advisory Board (TAB)