



Date: July 2, 2018

To: Alison Townsend, SDOT & Alex Kiheri, King County Metro

Subject: RapidRide Rainier Line

TAB Members:  
Marci Carpenter  
Jennifer Malley  
Andrew Martin  
Ron Posthuma  
Alexandra Rouse  
Carla Saulter  
Michelle Tang  
Erin Tighe  
Katie Wilson

Thank you for your March 28th presentation on Rainier RapidRide. The Transit Advisory Board shares your interest in improving transit service for the many thousands of riders using this route.

First and foremost, we believe changes on this route should benefit and not harm transit riders. Consequently, we object strongly to Option #2 for the International District to Mt. Baker segment and ask that you remove it from further consideration. Option #2 would actually slow transit travel times for thousands of daily transit riders on this most heavily traveled segment. We believe this option would also have adverse impacts from a race and social equity perspective. Option #1 is the only option that improves transit travel times in both directions by allocating meaningful street space to business access/transit lanes. When street space is scarce, it should be assigned to travel modes that move the most people.

That being said, providing an all ages and abilities bikeway along this corridor is important as well. If there is truly not room to accommodate both BAT lanes and bike lanes on Rainier itself, a new off-street path that is flat, safe, and truly bikeable from people of all ages and abilities should be created – even if additional land has to be purchased to make it possible.

Regarding stop consolidation, we ask that you proceed cautiously in light of the frequent on/off rider patterns on the corridor. Very few people are riding from Henderson to 4th & Jackson. Since time on the bus is not long for many riders, their added walk time to a stop may exceed their faster time on the bus. This might be true in particular on Jackson Street where the two proposed RapidRide stops appear to be more than half a mile apart on a hill and the stop nearest King Street Station is moved two blocks away from that important transit hub.

In addition, we ask that you proceed thoughtfully with off board fare enforcement. Many riders on this corridor are not native English speakers. Multi-lingual education will probably be more effective than uniformed enforcement.

*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*

Finally, we ask that SDOT carefully review the assumptions on which it based its analysis of what is possible on the Rainier corridor. Due to the complexity of this very long corridor, it is difficult as an outside observer to know exactly what inputs were used to create the outcomes that were publicly shared and, therefore, difficult to question those assumptions or make suggestions for how the problems faced along different stretches of the corridor could be thought about differently. Considering that the emphasis we heard you place in your presentation was on the importance of ensuring SOV throughput on Rainier due to the projected increase in residents in south Seattle, we wonder if some of the assumptions the agency has made in this regard are truly accurate.

Thanks again for sharing your thoughts on how to improve transit service on the Rainier corridor.

Sincerely,

Seattle Transit Advisory Board