



LARRY PHILLIPS

Chair

Metropolitan King County Council

October 14, 2005

Joni Earl
Chief Executive Officer
Sound Transit
401 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Ms. Earl,

I would like to formally request that Sound Transit study cost, ridership and feasibility of a potential rail extension connecting Ballard and Downtown Seattle. Connecting Ballard to the north-south Link light rail spine has long been a part of Sound Transit's Long Range Plan (LRP), and that vision was reaffirmed when the Sound Transit Board updated the LRP in July 2005.

On the November 8, 2005 election ballot, voters will be asked to choose whether to terminate the Seattle Monorail Project (SMP) or authorize a shortened Green Line that would not reach Ballard. Now that it's clear that the Green Line won't reach Ballard, the time is right for Sound Transit to actively study a rail extension to the neighborhood.

As a regional high capacity transit provider connecting urban centers, and the provider of Link Light Rail in the greater Seattle area, it makes sense for Sound Transit to integrate a Ballard corridor into its plan. Though the I-5 corridor and extension of light rail to Northgate is the region's highest priority, connecting Ballard—an important urban center and pro-transit neighborhood—to the regional spine is a complimentary goal.

In a September 6, 2005 letter to you, Sound Transit Board member and King County Councilmember Dwight Pelz requested that you investigate a streetcar link between West Seattle and Downtown. Please simultaneously consider a link between Ballard and Downtown. I agree with Councilmember Pelz that financing for constructing both of these projects should come from alternative tax sources, and not ST2 dollars. Should the SMP be terminated by voters, using local Seattle monorail tax revenues for these projects would require action by the Washington State Legislature.

Voters in Ballard have consistently demonstrated their commitment to mass transit both locally and regionwide. Thank you in advance for your assistance in studying Sound Transit's potential to bring enhanced transit to their neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Larry Phillips, Chair
Metropolitan King County Council
Sound Transit Board Member