

## Expert Review Panel for Sound Transit Phase 3 (ST3)

### SUMMARY OF MEETING

June 6, 2016

Courtyard Marriott Hotel, Seattle, WA

**Panel members present:** Jim Jacobson, Chair; Mark Hallenbeck, Susan Haupt, Kimberly Koenig, William Lorenz, Steve Lundin, Siim Sööt, Richard Walker, Mark Weed; **Administrator:** John Howell

**Presenters:** Val Batey, Brian Brooke, Eric Chipps, Ahmad Fazel, Ric Ilgenfritz, Thatcher Imboden, Karen Kitsis, Kathy Leotta, Brant Lyerla, Brian McCartan, Geoff Patrick, Kelly Priestley, Peter Rogoff, Chris Rule, Brian Stout, Adam Strutynski, Andrea Tull, and Valentina Zackrone (Sound Transit); Brent Baker, Allison Dobbins and Auden Kaehler(Parsons Brinckerhoff); Tom Backer (outside legal counsel)

**Members of the public who commented:** Victor Bishop, Will Knedlik, John Niles, Bill Popp, Jan Young

#### Welcome and Agenda Review

**Chair Jim Jacobson**

- This meeting focuses on revisions to the Draft Sound Transit 3 (ST3) Plan that the Sound Transit Board approved on June 2, the Draft ST3 Finance Plan, and on responses to the panel's prior questions.

#### Update on Recent Sound Transit Activities/Actions

**Ric Ilgenfritz (Sound Transit)**

See presentation slides, "Update on Recent ST Activities/Actions." Additional information and responses to panel questions were as follows:

- **Financial plan.** One major change in the Financial Plan is to add a policy on capital maintenance.
- **Operation and maintenance facilities (OMF).** A lesson from ST2 was to plan early for the location of OMFs. The draft ST3 plan now identifies the general OMF locations.
- **ST area change.** The Board has adopted a resolution to adjust the Sound Transit area boundaries because four cities in the area (Bellevue, Issaquah, Renton and Sammamish) have annexed new areas and adjusted their boundaries.
- **Sustainability.** Sound Transit has a long-term goal to be carbon neutral. This is also a topic of discussion in Washington cities and state government.
- **Legal weight of the ST3 plan.** The ST3 plan document is what the ballot measure will ask voters to approve. If voters approve, the plan will represent what Sound Transit is required and authorized to build. The agency cannot decide to add something that is not in the voter-approved plan except under extraordinary circumstances described in the plan's financial policies.
- **Fee for parking.** The reference in the Draft Plan to a "small fee" for parking is to a pilot program using a paid permit for parking. A Board policy directs staff to manage the scarce parking resources. Methods include fees, permits and monitoring. The ST3 plan includes this policy.

- **Asset management.** Appendix B for the ST3 Plan, the Financial Plan, includes a policy for capital replacement.

*Panel comments:*

- **Sustainability.** Internationally there is a movement to reduce use of fossil fuels. Norway is banning internal combustion vehicles by 2025.
- **Parking fee.** The policy to manage parking assets is good to have, but using the term “small” to describe parking fees in the ST3 Plan, which has the weight of law, might be too restrictive.
- **Asset management.** There is a state requirement that agencies receiving state money for assets must submit a plan for asset replacement.

## Overview of Changes to ST3 Draft System Plan

### *Chris Rule (Sound Transit)*

#### Project Changes Included in System Plan

### *Val Batey, Eric Chipps and Andrea Tull (Sound Transit)*

See presentation slides, “ST Board Meeting: ST3 Proposed Changes.” Additional information and responses to panel questions were as follows:

- **“Capped contributions” in early deliverables.** This term means that Sound Transit is not taking responsibility for the scope of the particular project, but will contribute to a local jurisdiction’s project. In the case of the early deliverable to improve bus speed and reliability on bus rapid transit (BRT) in Seattle, the City will apply for grant funding and use some levy funding, and Sound Transit will contribute additional funding.
- **Transit-oriented development (TOD) and infill stations.** Sound Transit’s TOD policy will apply to infill stations. For the Graham Street and 130th Street infill stations, Sound Transit will look to the City of Seattle to make supportive land use changes around those station areas. Seattle anticipates making changes to its comprehensive plan to include more density near the 130<sup>th</sup> Street station.
- **Cost of infill station.** The cost depends on the right-of-way cost and type of station. For 130<sup>th</sup> Street, the cost for this elevated station is approximately \$85 million (including vehicles, which will be allocated systemwide in the final plan).
- **Land use change.** The 130<sup>th</sup> Street station has been added to the ST3 plan. The staff advised the Sound Transit Board on likely ridership at this station and that land use changes could have a big impact. Seattle’s mayor and the city council member of that district have committed to reviewing the zoning around that station area. It is the Sound Transit Board’s policy judgment to add the 130<sup>th</sup> Street station to the plan, while recognizing that land use changes will have to follow.
- **Alignment to reach Ballard.** The ST3 plan now has light rail as fully elevated on 15<sup>th</sup> Ave. West with a bridge to cross the waterway into Ballard. To use a tunnel for the crossing would require additional funding from another entity, as the City of Bellevue provided to fund an underground instead of surface downtown station. However, this change would pose a schedule risk.

- **Lanes for BRT.** The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has added business access and transit (BAT) lanes to some segments of SR522 and is widening I-405 from Bellevue to Renton. The BRT will be in the BAT lanes of 522 and predominantly in the center of I-405. ST3 would extend the existing BAT lanes further on 522 for increased reliability. In addition, Sound Transit is working with WSDOT to identify areas of I-405 where there is a 10-foot shoulder and with enough depth to support running BRT on the shoulder.
- **Souder service enhancements tied to capital improvements.** The ST3 plan includes capital improvements for Souder. The related service improvements are not specific yet because Sound Transit is still in discussion with the railroad. The priority would be to expand peak service, and if possible, to add mid-day service. Sound Transit's goal is to reach an agreement before ST3 is on the ballot. Burlington Northern is actively engaged and takes pride in operating Souder.
- **Parking at DuPont.** The Sound Transit Board is aware that people from outside the Sound Transit taxing area are likely to drive to a DuPont station to use Souder.

*Panel comments:*

- **TOD policy.** TOD is not one-size-fits-all. It should not be for housing only. In some areas commercial and/or industrial uses make sense, and should be allowed under the TOD policy.
- **Land use and transit.** It is very important for land use policies and transportation investments to be well coordinated. Transportation investments without supportive land use policies will not be as effective as planned.

## **Ridership Estimates**

### **Brant Lyerla (Sound Transit)**

See presentation slides, "ST3 Expert Review Panel: Ridership Forecasting." Additional information and responses to panel questions were as follows:

- **Recent changes impacting ridership.** Three of the changes to the Draft ST3 Plan will impact ridership: (1) the changes in the Lynnwood to Everett corridor; (2) the additional BRT station in Renton; and (3) including the 130<sup>th</sup> Street station in the plan instead of as provisional.
- **Express bus ridership projected for 2040.** The projected 2040 Express bus ridership with ST3 is lower than without ST3 because with ST3, some Express bus routes will be replaced by light rail and others will run as BRT so are shown for that mode.
- **Length of trip.** In some cases, such as Express bus service from Tacoma to Seattle, the trip may be longer by light rail or Souder, but the service will be more frequent and more reliable (that is, not stuck in traffic). Also, BRT in high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes will not be as subject to congestion as trips in regular lanes.
- **Land use assumptions.** The ridership forecasts assume population and employment growth per the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Land Use Vision version 1.
- **Cost per rider and per new rider.** The costs were calculated by taking the total annualized capital cost plus the annual operations and maintenance cost. The Board has not yet seen the

cost per new rider estimates, but staff will provide the table to them. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) does not require this calculation for federally funded projects.

- **Per rider cost for Sounder to DuPont.** This is the highest cost per rider project. However, Sound Transit owns the right-of-way beyond DuPont. The project assumes double track and two stations—one at Tillicum near Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), and one at DuPont. Intercity Transit currently serves DuPont. WSDOT is expanding I-5 at DuPont. The assumption is for four trips per day, but this is flexible since Sound Transit owns the track and the fleet.
- **Possible opportunity at JBLM.** The base does not allow transit inside the gates. Sound Transit’s policies for TOD apply to all stations, so the TOD policy will apply for the Tillicum station. It may be feasible to engage JBLM in a TOD project.
- **Interest from other areas.** Sound Transit has been approached by the Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) about partnering. The TRPC has also had some preliminary discussions about annexing into the Sound Transit area. There has also been some interest expressed by Kitsap County.
- **Service outside the Sound Transit area boundaries.** The statement on p. 17 of the ST3 Plan (“Extending service outside the Sound Transit boundaries,” in *Sound Transit 3: A Mass Transit Guide*) was in the ST2 Plan. It implies that the Board has the authority to provide service outside the district if someone else funds it.
- **Link ridership.** The increase in Link ridership is not all from people switching from other modes. Increased ridership does not necessarily mean less congestion on highways in the future, but does take the riders off the road and out of congestion.

*Panel comments:*

- **Reliability.** There is value in having a reliable trip (not being stuck in traffic). Generally, people will accept a half-hour longer trip if it is reliable. A great advantage with a rail line is that it is in its own lane.
- **Cost per rider and per new rider.** The Sound Transit Board needs to see this information.
- **Pierce County growth.** Pierce County is 24 percent of the population in the Sound Transit area but will be 34 percent of the population growth for 2040. There will be increased need for transit there.
- **Service outside the Sound Transit area boundaries.** The statement on p. 17 of the ST3 Plan needs to be stronger to clarify what it means. Also, it should clarify that statute allows Sound Transit to provide service outside its boundary only if there is no existing transit there or agreement with a local transit agency.

## **Discussion of ST3 Finance Plan**

**Brian McCartan, Brian Stout and Kelly Priestley (Sound Transit), and Brent Baker (Parsons Brinckerhoff)**

See presentation slides, “Draft ST3 Financial Plan (May 26, 2016),” and the document, “Draft ST3 Financial Plan (May 26, 2016).” Additional information and responses to panel questions were as follows:

- **Percent of funds from grants.** The 9 percent from grants figure in the Sources of Funds chart is lower than the actual percentage from grants for ST2 (18 percent). However, it represents what the federal government could be expected to allocate—the equivalent for two to three full funding grants. The percentage is lower mainly because the ST3 program is substantially larger than the ST2 program.
- **North King and Sounder.** The Sources and Uses Summary chart shows Sounder expense only for South King and Pierce County since those are the subareas with new Sounder projects. Snohomish County chose to focus primarily on light rail for long-term expansion.
- **Systemwide activities.** The Systemwide line under O&M Expenditures is agency administration. The Systemwide line under Capital Expenditures includes the Operations and Maintenance Facilities (OMFs) and vehicles that the Board has decided are systemwide assets.
- **Spending peak.** In the ST3 Revenue & Spending graph, the peak of Capital expense is about 2028 is when light rail work would be underway for Tacoma and for Everett, and the Sounder trains would be purchased.
- **Bonding.** Where capital requirements are higher than revenue, there will be a need to bond. There is not a policy on the time lengths of the bonds, but for planning purposes, the assumption is 30 years.
- **Taxes.** The tax forecast is based on 2015 actuals. The Sales Tax Forecast reflects the stronger than expected sales tax in 2015. Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET) revenue is not expected as quickly because the value of cars has not been increasing. Sales tax on auto rentals is part of the Other category.
- **Potential impacts on other taxing districts.** Sound Transit is a junior taxing district, however for purposes of the \$5.90 per \$1,000 assessed valuation limitation, it has priority similar to a senior taxing district. Initial research indicates there is \$1.40 in capacity before the \$5.90 cap impacts another junior taxing district. Sound Transit has been in touch with the three county assessor offices to understand potential impacts and steps necessary to collect property tax should ST3 receive voter approval.
- **Operations and maintenance (O&M) cost forecast.** The ST3 plan originally had an assumption of 0.5 percent annual real growth, but now uses 1 percent in O&M costs. Since Sound Transit does not operate the transit service, O&M costs are passed through from the operating agencies. The plan assumes that Sound Transit can manage the cost growth, but it is an area of risk.
- **Risk assessment.** Static stress tests suggested that Sound Transit could absorb a Dotcom type of recession. Another 2008 “Great Recession” occurring early in the program (as took place for ST2) would require making some changes. Running a dynamic (Monte Carlo) risk assessment showed that: (1) there is modest risk (approximately 18 percent probability) that Sound Transit will exceed 80 percent of its legal debt capacity, with the most critical period in 2035 – 36; and (2) there is modest risk approaching 15 percent probability in the 2038 time frame that the agency’s debt service coverage ratio could drop below the adopted policy of 1.5x. The most important element of risk is tax growth in the early years of the program. Overall, the risk analysis showed that the plan is robust. It was noted that since the dynamic risk assessment

analysis is based on financial plan capital costs estimates and timing from one iteration previous to the current one, the risk assessment will be re-run with the final plan.

- **Guidance to reduce or add to the project.** Under the Board’s financial policies, if funding fell short, the Board would decide what to suspend or delay. If more funds were available, the Board would decide which provisional projects to add.
- **Short-term debt.** The plan allows the agency to issue short-term debt. The assumption is for fixed-rate debt, but models have been conducted for variable-rate debt, as well.
- **Reserves.** The Board is committed to funding operating reserves.
- **Cost per new rider.** This information will appear in Appendix C of the plan (the Benefits, Costs, Revenues, Capacity, Reliability and Performance Characteristics).
- **Changes in subarea equity over time.** For planning, Sound Transit does not incorporate these changes except in the farebox revenue. For the tax forecast, regional differences are taken into account. Staff will monitor the changes over time and provide updates to the Board. Any surpluses in farebox revenue could be used by subarea.
- **Calculating state-of-good-repair.** The calculation is detailed based on standard codes for specific items and the forecasted life of assets. More cost is shown for East King because the light rail extension to Redmond will occur early in the ST3 program, and because East King will have a good deal of BRT. The bulk of state-of-good-repair spending there is on bus replacement. State-of-good-repair is in the financial plan policies but has now been elevated to a policy in the main plan.
- **Tax rollback at the conclusion of the program.** The policy refers to “taxes” but does not provide details. Sound Transit has told bond holders that it would step down the sales taxes first. When the ST3 program is complete, the future finance director will propose a rollback method to the Board.

*Panel comments:*

- **Property taxes.** Property inflation that is greater than 101 percent drives tax rates down. The Legislature could change the rate limitation if it chose to do so.
- **Tax on internet sales.** There is interest at the federal level in requiring collection of taxes on internet sales. If this were enacted, a large amount of new taxes could be available to Sound Transit, which could fund provisional projects.

*Panel request:*

- **Appendices.** The panel would like to see the plan appendices when they are available.

## **Report on Outreach Activities**

### ***Geoff Patrick and Karen Kitsis (Sound Transit)***

See presentation slides, “ST3 Draft Plan: Results from Spring 2016 Draft Plan comment period”; “ST3 Draft Plan Public Involvement”; and “ST3 Draft Plan: Summary of Jurisdictional & Stakeholder Comments.” Additional information and responses to panel questions were as follows:

- **Comments on cost.** In the online survey and phone poll, there were a lower number of public comments about the cost of the ST3 plan. Online survey participants were self-selected and likely to be in favor of transit.
- **Jurisdiction actions and requests.** Examples of jurisdictions that have responded to the proposed projects are: (1) Snohomish County, the City of Everett and the City of Lynnwood passed an interlocal agreement to help streamline the permitting process for developing the light rail to Everett; (2) the City of Seattle identified possible project elements to consider if funding becomes available; and (3) the City of Renton suggested removing an HOV direct access at NE 8<sup>th</sup>, and replacing it with a transit center with parking, and an additional BRT stop at NE 44<sup>th</sup>.

## Overview of Changes, cont.

### Review of Policy Language for System Improvements

#### *Thatcher Imboden, Chris Rule and Brian Brooke (Sound Transit)*

See presentation slides, “ST3 Draft Key Program/Policy Language,” “TOD within the ST3 System Plan,” and “Innovation and Technology Fund.” There were no specific questions.

#### *Panel comments:*

- **TOD.** At some stations, TOD needs to focus on commercial activity rather than housing.
- **Leveraging.** TOD offers an opportunity for leveraging with the city in which the station is located.

### Cost Estimates for ST3 Maintenance Facilities

#### *Chris Rule (Sound Transit)*

See presentation slides, “Operations & Administration Committee: ST3 Draft System Plan” and “LRT Operations & Maintenance Facilities,” and handouts labeled “South Seattle Maintenance Base Cost Comparison” and “OMSF compared to the O & M Facility at Forest Street (C810).” Additional information and responses to panel questions were as follows:

- **Cost.** For the ST3 Financial Plan, Sound Transit is using the most expensive of the identified O&M base sites for the cost estimates. In siting an O&M facility, the most variable cost is the right-of-way.
- **Communication with jurisdictions.** Sound Transit has not communicated with jurisdictions regarding the specific locations that might be considered for the new O&M facilities.

## Discussion of Project Delivery

### Combined ST2 and ST3 Design and Construction Schedule

#### *Adam Strutyński, Brian McCartan, Peter Rogoff, Valentina Zackrone, and Ahmad Fazel (Sound Transit)*

See presentation slides, “ST3 Project Delivery,” and handouts “Timelines for Major Sound Transit ST3 Projects,” “Planning Phase Work for SM, ST2 & ST3,” “Final Design Phase Work for SM, ST2 & ST3,” and

“Construction Phase Work for SM, ST2 & ST3.” Additional information and responses to panel questions were as follows:

- **Length of projects.** Historically, Sound Transit light rail projects have taken between 11 and 14 years.
- **Changes to speed up projects.** The main change to accelerate the schedule came from the bonding assumptions in the financial plan. But in addition, some project schedules were shortened through changes in the project, such as using I-5 right-of-way for part of the light rail line to Everett. In some cases, there are efficiencies from speeding up a project, such as not using an interim terminus for the line to Federal Way. Starting earlier to procure properties will also speed up projects. The biggest opportunities to speed up are in the project development phase and through partnerships with jurisdictions.
- **Contractor capacity.** For Airport Station in Sound Move there was only one bidder. Since then, most projects have had four or five bidders. Three contractors from out of town have contacted Sound Transit recently to indicate interest in work in our region. Transit work in Portland and Denver is slowing down now. Sound Transit also has developed partnerships with the Association of Consulting Engineering Contractors and the Association of General Contractors, and has been in communication with the relevant trade unions.
- **Timing of capital spending.** Spending for ST2 was high early in the program, while the ST3 spending peak comes in the middle of the program.
- **Education partnership opportunities.** Sound Transit has funds set aside for apprenticeship programs. There may be opportunities to partner with Highline Community College and Bellevue College. In Denver there was a program to hire young people to do construction and then to train them to be transit operators once the construction was done.
- **Labor supply for property acquisition.** There is a shortage of labor for property acquisition in the region. Sound Transit would like to build up its in-house capacity.
- **Project overlap.** While there is some overlap in the work of ST2 and ST3, when viewed by phase (planning/environmental, design, and construction), the overlap is small. Depending on the project delivery method, the number of workers needed will vary.
- **Unknowns.** The projects will face multiple unknowns, such as the economy and the availability of the needed materials in a world marketplace.
- **Federal grants.** Sound Transit has been fortunate in getting federal grant money for several ST2 projects. However, the FTA capital program does not get gas tax dollars and can't be assumed to grow. Some cities have gotten Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) grants for rail projects. However, new funding for these grants has not been appropriated yet.
- **Impact of new technology.** There is discussion in the federal Department of Transportation about self-driving cars and other technologies, and how to bring them up to scale. Many questions need to be answered, such as who pays to wire the vehicles and the road. ST3 is building out the commitment to create a real transportation network for the region. Trip use data show that residents travel between many destinations, not just to center cities. Given the projected population growth across the region, the ST3 plan still makes sense.

- **Project vs. service focus.** ST3 will be a culture change for Sound Transit, with emphasis increasing on operating the service, and the Operations Department as the customer of the projects.

*Panel comments:*

- **Capacity for simultaneous projects.** The panel is not aware of other transit agencies in the country that have this many construction projects underway simultaneously. However, the approach Sound Transit has described addresses the panel’s previous concerns about capacity.
- **Staffing for right-of-way work.** Sound Transit might consider developing a Memorandum of Agreement with WSDOT to use some of their staff with expertise in this work.
- **Plan and financial plan documents.** The plans are well written, which is important since they will define what Sound Transit is authorized to do.
- **Legislative education requirement.** The ST3 Plan should include language about the \$518 million that the Legislature has required Sound Transit to provide to fund education. Voters also need to be apprised of that requirement, as well as the affordable housing requirement.
- **Stakeholder involvement.** Sound Transit should involve the Operations Department and some riders in designing projects and station areas.

## **ST3 Compliance Report**

### **State Law Requirements**

**Allison Dobbins (Parsons Brinckerhoff), Tom Backer, Attorney at Law**

See report, “Sound Transit 3 Compliance with HCT System Planning Requirements – Draft Options Assessment and Analysis Methods Technical Memorandum.” Additional information and responses to panel questions were as follows:

- **Purpose of report.** The report describes how Sound Transit has complied with state statutes on high-capacity transit (HCT). The report is based on the current draft ST3 Plan and will be finalized after the Sound Transit Board’s action approving the plan at the June 23 meeting. There is also a companion report on how Sound Transit met public involvement requirements.
- **Least-cost planning.** Least-cost planning is required for multimodal transportation plans at the regional level of the PSRC. Sound Transit works with PSRC and has to show how ST3 fits with PSRC’s Transportation 2040 plan. The ST3 plan then becomes part of the broader PSRC regional plan.

### **Benefit-Cost Methodology**

**Auden Kaehler (Parsons Brinckerhoff)**

See report, “ST3 Regional High-Capacity Transit System Plan: Benefit-Cost Analysis Methodology Report.” Additional information and responses to panel questions were as follows:

- **Update of ST2 cost-benefit.** The report reviews the ST2 cost analysis and updates it for the ST3 investments.

- **Elements of analysis.** The ST3 cost-benefit analysis includes:
  - Travel time savings and reduction in miles traveled, using baseline highway conditions to show benefits to transit users.
  - A no-build case that includes only the assets built in ST2.
  - An assumption of some form of highway user fee in addition to gas tax.
  - Evaluation of benefits out to 2072, when ST3 is complete and in full use.
- **Reliability.** The analysis does not include a value for travel time reliability. Freight reliability is part of travel time savings for commercial vehicles.

*Panel comment:*

- **Reliability.** Not including a value for travel time reliability makes the benefit-cost analysis very conservative. The greatest benefit of high-capacity transit to the traveling public is travel time reliability.

## Public Comment

### Will Knedlik

- Mr. Knedlik provided a letter to the panel members that he would like to be part of the record.
- Mr. Knedlik noted that a critical point in the panel’s review process was when they made a request for information at the February 8 meeting and Sound Transit did not provide it.
- Mr. Knedlik thanked the panel for focusing on state-of-good-repair, noting that ST2 taxes will not be rolled back, and asking for data on the cost per rider.
- He stated that making the new downtown Seattle tunnel a system-wide asset is a problem for subarea equity.
- He asked if the panel will question the statement that ST3 will cost \$400 per household. He calculated the cost to be \$2,300 per household annually for 23 years. He said that growth in the number of households will spread the cost but not reduce it to \$400.
- He said that the taxes to be collected for ST3 are \$77 billion rather than \$50 billion.
- He asked if the panel will say that Sound Transit needs to make the full financial information clear to taxpayers.

### John Niles

- Mr. Niles said it would be helpful to voters to reconcile the total tax bill over 25 years with the \$400 per household cost stated. He said that more discussion is needed as to where the taxes will come from.
- Mr. Niles said that the benefit-cost analysis is structured so as to show that the cost is favorable.
- Mr. Niles said that the Board needs to see the cost per rider table. He said it makes clear that ST3 does not conform to least-cost planning.
- Regarding traffic congestion, Mr. Niles said that there needs to be a clear statement that ST3 will not relieve traffic congestion and that no Environmental Impact Statement has found a change in congestion.

### Victor Bishop

- Mr. Bishop said that in 1994 the Legislature passed a law requiring all public agencies to use least-cost planning. He said it is a loop in logic to say that PSRC, not Sound Transit, is responsible for least-cost planning, when the ST3 plan is then incorporated into the PSRC plan.
- Mr. Bishop stated that BRT costs less and moves people as well as or better than light rail.
- He encouraged the panel to look further into how least-cost planning is or is not used for ST3.

### Jan Young

- Ms. Young expressed concern about the short time for public review of the draft plan, stating that there were only three days to comment on it before the plan was presented to the Board on May 26. She questioned whether adding plans without sufficient time for public comment might violate FTA protocol.
- She noted that the revised plan included some elements that were not in the plan that was out for public comment, such as the \$335 million light rail extension from Bellevue to the Kirkland park-and-ride. She said no details or cost per rider for this segment have been shown to the public, and that the City of Bellevue has not had an opportunity to comment.

### Bill Popp

- Mr. Popp noted that in the presentation on ridership, Metro, Pierce Transit and Community Transit were not included. He said that adding them would give a different picture of the cost per rider.
- Mr. Popp said that transit in the HOV lanes is not slowed down because the lanes are overloaded but because bus drivers are instructed not to drive faster than drivers in other lanes. He said that changing this policy would mean that expensive BRT would not be needed.
- Mr. Popp said that the cost per rider information is important to provide widely and that it shows that ST3 is three times more costly than current transit.
- He suggested considering a combination of express buses and a jitney service such as Uber.

### Discussion of Issues and Next Steps

- **Comments from meeting.** John Howell listed the following possible areas for the panel's letter of comment:
  1. **Specific comments on ST3 Plan and Financial Plan.** Besides the comment that the plan does not mention the Legislature's requirement about education funding, panel members should let Mr. Howell know soon if they have other comments.
  2. **Partnerships with cities.** It is important to partner with cities on land use, TOD, zoning, infrastructure, and related policies.
  3. **Cost of alignment changes.** Sound Transit should be more explicit in letting cities know that major changes in alignment will require additional funding from partners.
  4. **Cost per rider.** The Board needs to see the chart on cost per rider and per new rider.
  5. **Finance Plan.** Suggestion to inform the Board that sales tax growth and O&M cost growth are areas of risk. There are questions about how Sound Transit describes the cost of the plan

- for citizens, whether the analysis uses the most recent assessed values, and whether it is the value only within the district or countywide. Ms. Koenig might have other comments.
6. **Maintenance facilities.** Suggestion to be clear about which cities are being considered as potential OMF locations.
  7. **Project scheduling.** The schedule is aggressive, but the staff has outlined a comprehensive program to address labor and contractor capacity.
  8. **Stakeholder involvement in planning.** Suggestion to involve riders and operators in planning and design work.
- **Final panel letter.** The panel letter on topics from this meeting needs to be sent before the Board's action on June 23. The panel also needs to write a comprehensive final letter on meeting its charge and summing up its comments.
  - **Additional meetings.** The panel members will need to decide if they want to meet to discuss the final set of comments in person or if this can be done by email.
  - **State requirement.** The law requires the panel to stay in existence until the vote on ST3.