



**Date:** July 23, 2015  
**To:** Sound Transit Board of Directors  
**From:** Ric Ilgenfritz, Executive Director of Planning, Environmental and Project Development  
Craig Davison, Executive Director of Communications and External Affairs  
**Subject:** Summary of June/July 2015 Sound Transit 3 Public Involvement  
**Attachment:** Online survey results

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This memo provides an overview of outreach activities, participation levels, and key themes heard while engaging the public in the first major phase of Sound Transit 3 development: the evaluation of the Board's Draft Priority Project List. The public involvement campaign ran from June 4 through July 8, 2015. Jurisdictions and stakeholder organizations were requested to submit comments by July 15, and some of these letters continue to be received.

Public participation was very strong, with **1,025 written comments** submitted by mail, email and comment forms; more than **400 attendees** at six open houses; and **24,797 responses** to a non-scientific online survey. The survey response was more than double the approximately 12,300 responses to similar surveys in fall 2013 and summer 2014 that informed updates to the regional transit Long-Range Plan (LRP).

The people who took the time to take the non-scientific survey were overwhelmingly supportive in their views about expanding regional transit services. Some **93 percent of respondents** reported supporting mass transit expansion across the region, either 'strongly' or 'somewhat'. This high level of support is consistent with the 2014 survey where 95 percent of respondents supported mass transit expansion. A strong majority of respondents – **78 percent** – felt Sound Transit had identified a good set of projects to study. About 20 percent responded to an open-ended question offering suggestions of other projects to study, and many of those who responded provided comments on projects that were already on the list.

Detailed results to this survey are summarized in a separate attachment. All comments received as part of this comment period are being provided to Board members verbatim on CD and will be made available on the Sound Transit web site.

### **Survey key findings**

Every corridor saw a dramatic increase in respondents over the 2014 LRP engagement. This is based on home zip codes provided by respondents.

	2015		2014		<i>% increase Year over year</i>
<b>North Corridor</b>	2,883	11.6%	1,089	8.94%	<i>165%</i>
<b>Central Corridor</b>	11,938	48.1%	6,514	52.45%	<i>83%</i>
<b>East Corridor</b>	3,806	15.3%	1,463	12.00%	<i>160%</i>
<b>South Corridor</b>	4,318	17.4%	2,531	20.76%	<i>71%</i>
<b>Out of District</b>	1,852	7.5%	591	4.85%	<i>213%</i>

The vast majority of respondents provided positive feedback for the expansion of regional mass transit. This was demonstrated both when respondents were asked generally about their level of support for regional mass transit, and when asked individually about specific projects.

**All projects were rated at least 2.5 or above** on a scale of 1-5 (5 being "extremely important"). In short, everything was considered important. The two projects rated highest across all projects, across all 24,700 respondents were the System Access Program and the Transit Oriented Development Program.

When asked **what compels them to support mass transit**, respondents cited population growth; greater capacity for moving people in light rail versus a freeway lane; and that planning for a regional system has been a vision for decades and needs to be completed.

### **Favorite projects by geography**

Survey respondents were asked to rate all projects on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being "extremely important." Based on reported home zip codes, the following priority projects are favored by residents of these corridors.

	<i>Rating by relevant corridor respondents</i>
<b><i>Central Corridor</i></b>	
C-03a Downtown Seattle to West Seattle/Junction, elevated	4.02
C-01c Downtown Seattle to Ballard (Market Street vicinity), primarily elevated/tunnel options	3.92
C-04 New Downtown Seattle tunnel connection	3.90
<b><i>North Corridor</i></b>	
N-02c Lynnwood Transit Center to Everett via I-5	3.84
N-02b Lynnwood Transit Center to Everett Station via I-5 and SR 99/Evergreen Way	3.77
N-03 Edmonds Permanent Station	3.71
<b><i>East Corridor</i></b>	
E-03 Totem Lake to Issaquah via Bellevue (light rail)	3.94
E-01 Overlake Transit Center to SE Redmond to Downtown Redmond (East Link)	3.86
E-02 I-405 BRT: Lynnwood to SeaTac in HOV/managed lanes	

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***South Corridor***

S-08 Additional Sounder South Service	4.18
S-07 Expand Sounder South Train Platforms to 8 cars	3.85
S-03 Federal Way to Tacoma Dome via I-5	3.80

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**Survey open-ended question: “What is missing?”**

Respondents had the opportunity in an open-ended question to write-in projects that they thought should be included in the Draft Priority Project List. Over **5,000, offered responses**. Many of the open-ended answers reiterated support for projects on the list and many suggested projects that were not included in the Long-Range Plan. Those that were most frequently suggested for further study as part of ST3 included:

- BRT on SR 522 with future light rail options
- BRT on SR 523/NE 145<sup>th</sup> Street with connections to light rail station
- Light rail on I-405
- Light rail from Issaquah directly to/from Seattle
- Light rail from West Seattle to Sea-Tac Airport/Burien
- Light rail on SR 520
- Light rail from South Lake Union to Capitol Hill.
- Light rail from Ballard to other parts of North Seattle
- Sounder related improvements
- Parking/access improvements
- Faster service to Sea-Tac Airport
- A new bus/rail tunnel in Downtown Seattle

**Survey demographics**

Notably, 83 percent of people who chose to take the survey self-reported as white and 63 percent reported coming from households earning more than \$71,000. The median age range reported was 26-35. A more detailed breakdown is found within the survey topline, attached.

**Written comments**

In written comments received by email, mail and comment form, interest in the ST3 process was a consistent theme. Another was interest in gaining further clarity on project costs and funding sources. Those who provided written comments generally emphasized the impact of rising congestion on their daily lives. Written comments also expressed support for completing the light rail spine from Tacoma to Everett, and for providing grade separation on high-capacity transit to achieve maximum benefit. Lack of parking availability was mentioned frequently.

## Input received from jurisdictions and organizations

We received more than 70 letters from jurisdictions and agencies (30+); higher learning institutions; elected and stakeholder groups: and employers. This input expressed the following:

- The Draft Project Priority List captured most of what jurisdictions and other organizations are looking for
- Most comments can be addressed within existing projects or categories
- Additional bus service, access to stations and parking continue to be important
- Comments re-emphasized corridors or suggested additional elements to projects already on the Draft Priority Project List, as well as suggested additional projects.

Additional corridors suggested included:

- BRT on 522 BRT with future light rail service
- BRT on SR 523/NE 145<sup>th</sup>
- Light rail from West Seattle to Sea-Tac Airport/Burien
- Additional South Sounder destinations (Dupont, Orting)

## Methods for promoting public engagement

Sound Transit continually works to refine the reach and effectiveness of its efforts to promote public awareness and involvement. The below methods that were used in the recent outreach will be analyzed to identify improvement opportunities, with particular focus on seeking broader input geographically and demographically.

- Developed Sound Transit 3 website, designed for accessibility with a range of devices. Website generated more than **54,000** unique page views.
- Distributed a direct mailer to approximately **980,000** registered voter households in the district, encouraging people to attend a meeting and to take the survey.
- Provided email notification to transportation planning staff at all partner agencies and jurisdictions in the region.
- Sent emails to more than **42,000** contacts who have signed up to receive information about system expansion, capital projects and rider alerts.
- Conducted briefings across the district to city councils and other stakeholder groups.
- Coordinated with partner agencies, jurisdictions and stakeholder groups to provide information to their distribution lists/members and online newsletters, reaching tens of thousands additional recipients.
- Ran a robust advertising effort involving online, print, social and mobile app media as well as distributing more than **1,000 event posters** at locations around Puget Sound. We also shared information with local community calendars and blogs.

- Supplemented advertising with translated advertisements in ethnic media publications and distributed posters at locations frequented by traditionally under-represented populations.
- Earned extensive media coverage as well as links to the survey from dozens of blog posts and electronic newsletter articles.
- Staffed a project information line to provide information and answer questions about the ST3 process.
- Ensured ST3 information was available at other events hosted by Sound Transit during the comment period, such as project and customer outreach fairs and festival booths.