



City of Tacoma

City Council

Dear Members of the Sound Transit Board,

We are writing to strongly urge you to prioritize transit investments in Tacoma and Pierce County as you work to address the agency's current financial challenges and advance the ST3 program. Tacoma cares deeply about its transit future, and our community will not accept delays that disproportionately impact the South Sound.

We recognize the seriousness of the estimated \$34.5 billion funding gap and appreciate Sound Transit's proactive efforts through the Enterprise Initiative to identify cost savings and efficiencies. These are necessary and responsible steps. However, even in the face of these constraints, it is critical that investments across the system reflect a truly regional vision and do not come at the expense of communities that have long awaited connection.

The need for expanded high-capacity transit in the South Sound has never been greater. The South Sound is home to the state's second-largest county by population, and Tacoma is one of the fastest-growing cities in Washington state. Together, this region serves nearly one million residents and functions as a vital economic engine for the state. Communities across the South Sound play a significant role in supporting the regional workforce, industrial base, and port-driven economy. Increasing congestion along Interstate 5 and State Route 99 continues to degrade mobility, limit economic opportunity, and impact quality of life for residents and workers alike. Ensuring these communities are well connected to the broader transit network is essential to sustaining economic growth, supporting employers, and expanding access to opportunity for a large and diverse population.

Within this broader context, the Tacoma Dome Link Extension remains a critical and long-promised project that has already been delayed 5-years (from 2030 to 2035). The Tacoma Dome Station represents more than a terminus. It is planned as the region's primary multimodal hub, connecting light rail with regional and local transit, including the T Line, and linking riders to downtown Tacoma, major employers, educational institutions, and healthcare services. The City has already rezoned to

accommodate and welcome the future station, and we have already seen a groundswell of private investment based on the expectation that this infrastructure is coming. This level of preparation underscores that Tacoma is ready to fully realize the benefits of this project.

It is also vital that ST3 projects continue to reflect strong collaboration with the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. Ongoing partnership and meaningful engagement will be essential to delivering a project that honors Tribal priorities and strengthens relationships within the community.

While difficult decisions lie ahead, investments of this significance should not be deferred in ways that undermine long-term regional mobility or disproportionately impact the South Sound. Tacoma is ready, and our region's future depends on a system that serves us fully. We urge you to keep Pierce County commitments a priority within the ST3 program.

Thank you for your leadership and for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Mayor Anders Ibsen

Council Member John Hines – Position 1

Council Member Sarah Rumbaugh – Position 2

Council Member Jamika Scott – Position 3

Council Member Sandesh Sadalge – Position 4

Council Member Joe Bushnell – Position 5

Council Member Latasha Palmer – Position 6

Council Member Olgy Diaz – Position 7

Council Member Kristina Walker – Position 8