

DRAFT

City of Lake Forest Park Council(members)

This draft could be revised to refer to Council or Councilmembers, depending on the results of our discussion.

Dear Chair Constantine and Sound Transit Board Members:

In late 2022, the Lake Forest Park City Council formally requested a brief pause in the Stride Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) design work for 1.2 miles in Lake Forest Park (LFP), then only at the draft 60% level, so that we could work cooperatively to develop design refinements. We made this request because of the north/east-bound BAT's huge environmental and fiscal impacts lane through LFP, compared to its minimal transit, traffic flow, and travel time benefits.

Briefly, our city is the most heavily impacted community of the entire four-city project, and is the site of the costliest segment of the route. Compared to the project as a whole, LFP's 1.2 mile span has 56% of the property takings, and the majority of removed trees: 110 homes and small businesses on Bothell Way and over 400 buffer trees removed. BRT budget estimates are also highest in LFP, including \$83 million for property acquisition and permits and \$210 million for construction/ construction management. In contrast, transit benefits will be modest, only about 2 minutes, only north/east-bound, and only at peak rush hour.

The Council appreciates the recent communications and information that CEO Timm has shared with our community, including her personal time and attendance as well as her September 2023 response to our December letter. This exchange has been helpful.

The Council would like to share with you what we have learned through this recent engagement and design work, along with our updated concerns:

- 1) The many property takings along with removal of 40 buffer trees for the BAT lane will bring bus traffic on both sides of SR 522 much closer to front and back doors of over 100 LFP homeowners and several multi-family buildings. None of the other cities along the route will experience impacts on this scale.
- 2) Driveways from dozens of private homes, multi-family buildings, and businesses will enter and exit directly into an active bus lane, creating traffic and safety issues.
- 3) These takings will also result in removal of parking spaces for local small businesses.
- 4) Property takings, coupled with removal of hundreds of buffer trees and shrubs, will increase noise and reduce air quality by bringing these much closer to our residences and businesses. Adverse human health impacts will result from these impacts.

5) The massive west side retaining wall (the length of many football fields), substituting for the current corridor of trees, will reflect and magnify noise impacts on these same homeowners.

6) Construction will add 1.3 acres of new impervious surfaces affecting 3 fish streams and, coupled with tree removals, will increase heat island effects.

7) No construction plans yet exist for crossing Blsche'tla Creek, currently on the state's "must fix" culvert list and where the proposal is to remove 28 trees from what is already a designated landslide and sensitive area. Further, we understand that ST wants to span the creek with a pedestrian bridge at city expense.

7) 95,000 tons of dirt and debris (65% of project total), will have to be removed for the BAT in LFP, creating massive trucking and construction impacts on our residents and businesses.

These are fundamental BAT harms that would have lasting serious adverse effects on our community, not aesthetic concerns or easily mitigated impacts, despite ST staff assertions. We do understand that Sound Transit is facing a number of challenges in trying to improve transportation in the Puget Sound region, and LFP supports public transit improvements. However, the Council believes that the BAT lane is not the right transit solution for Bothell Way through LFP. **We urge Sound Transit to reconsider the BAT proposal and work with us to develop a LFP transit solution based on queue bypasses and signalized lights, an approach that will capture similar traffic flow and transit benefits, but without such disproportionate environmental, safety, community, and fiscal costs.**

There is convincing precedent for changing course and adopting a non-BAT solution. On 145th Street during peak eastbound congestion, Sound Transit's engineering solution is queue bypasses with signalized lights. This queue bypass approach on 145th accounts for 62% of the 15 minute peak eastbound travel time savings for the entire BRT (vs. "no build," see attached). Claims that the two similar traffic congestion situations and patterns are entirely different are not persuasive. Rather, Sound Transit is now implementing with great effectiveness on 145th Street what we are respectfully requesting for LFP. We hope you will agree.

Sincerely,

Tom French
Deputy Mayor and Council Chair
On behalf of the following LFP City Councilmembers:

Cc: CEO Julie Timm

Year: 2044 PM Peak Eastbound	Time Between Stops No Build 2042	Time Between Stops With Build 2042	Time Saved (Minutes) Build Vs No Build	% of all Time Saved
148th and 5th Ave	-	-	-	-
145th/15th	13.3	5.5	7.9	50%
145th/30th	4.0	2.1	1.9	12%
Bothell Way/ 153rd	4.7	4.2	0.5	3%
Bothell Way/ 165th	3.0	2.1	0.9	6%
Lake Forest Park/Bothell Way	1.8	0.9	0.8	5%
Bothell Way/61st	3.1	2.7	0.4	3%
Bothell Way/68th	2.5	2.2	0.2	1%
Kenmore P&R	1.6	1.5	0.1	1%
98th/182nd	6.6	5.6	1.0	6%
185th/104th	2.5	1.6	0.8	5%
UWB	5.7	4.7	1.1	7%
Beardslee/195th	3.3	3.3	0.0	0%
I-405 Station	2.4	2.4	0.0	0%
Total Time	54.4	38.8	15.7	100%

