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PARKING SERVICES

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To: King County Council

RE: King County Metro North Link Connections Mobility Project

On behalf of the University of Washington Seattle campus, thank you for the opportunity to be a member of the Partner Review Board and provide feedback on the proposed North Link Connections Mobility Project. The University appreciates the level of outreach, collaboration and engagement shown to the campus community in this planning effort.

North Link and UW

The University of Washington supports the goals set forth in the North Link Connections Mobility Project to effectively serve regional light rail stations, enhance travel time efficiencies and reliability for riders, provide equitable services that reflects the diversity of our communities, and improve connections to major destinations and essential services.

Effective transit service is foundational to the future success and growth of UW's Seattle Campus. Our 2019 Campus Mater Plan targets a reduction in drive-alone commuting to 12% by 2028. While Link light rail is a key component in achieving that target, local and regional bus service to campus is equally vital to meeting those objectives.

Service Themes

Throughout the planning on the North Link Connections Mobility Project, the University has appreciated Metro's partnership in consideration of the following principles necessary to serve the Seattle Campus community:

- **Serve the UW as a Regional Destination:** The University has more than 75,000 students, staff and faculty travelling to the Seattle campus every day, plus more than 150,000 visitors a year. The diversity of the populations coming to the UW requires transit service that is frequent, reliable and convenient.
- **Engage in Holistic Planning:** Integration with other transit, roadway and mobility projects in the U-District is essential to creating a transportation network that serves the Seattle campus community and our neighbors. Metro should consider the cumulative impacts of all transportation projects and planning

efforts to avoid gaps in service and continue the efficient movement of people and goods. Some of the upcoming projects that should be aligned include Rapid Ride on Roosevelt, 43rd Street and 12th Avenue improvements, BAT lanes on 45th Street and 15th Avenue, and SR 520.

- **Take Opportunities to Expand Service.** The University, including UW Medical Center at both its Montlake and Northwest locations, has students, staff and patients who must utilize transit beyond peak periods. We request Metro to look at opportunities to increase span of service earlier in the morning and later in the evening on routes that serve the University.
- **Prioritize Equity and Access.** The University understands the coronavirus pandemic has caused significant impacts to current and future funding for transit operations, and encourages Metro to prioritize the needs of essential workers and populations without access to other transportation options as service restoration and long-term transit planning.
- **Prioritize Multi-modal Access.** The University is interested in a well-functioning urban neighborhood with the various modes and providers working together for a successful multi-modal experience to capture a variety of mobility-abled users and the “last mile” of travel. Integrated consideration of ADA parking access, drop off options, bicycle mobility, pedestrian mobility, safety, natural surveillance, and surrounding building access is important to achieve success.

Beyond these general service themes, the University also wants to provide support and comments on specific route changes proposed in the North Link Mobility Connections Project.

Service Revisions

Route 31/32

The University supports the resumption of transit service across NE 45th Street, and looks forward to the connections and mobility this service will provide to the north side of the UW campus.

Route 70, 44, 49, and 372

We support the proposed reroutes to serve the U District Station via NE 43rd Street.

Route 45/75

We strongly support the through-routing of Routes 45 and 75 via UW Medical Center and UW Station.

Route 48

We are pleased to see the extension of Route 48 north to University Heights Community Center. We look forward to similar utilization of the 15th Ave NE primary transit corridor by other routes to better serve the University and U-District without forcing transfers which are inconvenient for riders and may cause additional expense to the University through the U-PASS program.

Route 73

We support the extension of the 73 to UW Station and the UW Medical Center.

Route 74

We note routing has changed to stop short of the UW Medical Center, and will lay over at Boat Street. While our preference is that this route serve the UW Medical Center directly via Montlake Triangle, we support the addition of a stop at 15th Ave NE adjacent to Foege Hall and the Portage Bay Garage. While the new stop will assist in providing safer and more convenient access to UW Medical Center and Health Sciences employees, the distance to the public entries of the UW Medical Center are too far to support public access to medical care and services, especially for patients and visitors with physical limitations. We acknowledge and support revisions made to previous proposals to extend other routes to UW Station and the UW Medical Center, and we stress that this part of campus is a major employment, community and events destination on a regional scale.

On-Going Engagement

Continued, on-going coordination between Metro and the University on near-term and long-term transit service and layover on the Seattle campus and within the University District is needed. The University would like to partner with Metro on solutions that provide the best level of service to the University community and U-District, and which limit negative impacts on University facilities.

Beyond the North Link Connections Mobility Project, the University looks forward to engagement with Metro and other partners on the following upcoming efforts:

- Rapid Ride J routing to best serve the UW Campus
- BAT lane extensions on 15th and 45th
- Service restoration from COVID-19

- East Link transit service restructure
- SR 520 transit coordination

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide feedback on the North Link Connections Mobility Project, and we look forward to our continued partnership to best serve the University Seattle Campus and the surrounding communities.

Sincerely,



Caryn Walline, Commute Options & Planning Manager, UW Transportation Services
North Link Connections Mobility Project Partner Review Board Member

CC:

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