



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL | DISTRICT 1

COUNCILMEMBER ROB SAKA

November 7, 2025

Sent Via Email

Sound Transit Board Chair Dave Somers
401 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98014

Re: Support for Businesses Impacted by West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) Project

Dear Board Chair Somers, CEO Constantine, and Sound Transit Board Members,

I am following up on my [letter](#) dated March 17, 2025 that I sent to you to share the ongoing concerns I've been hearing from small businesses across my district regarding the West Seattle Link Extension (WSLE) project. These businesses consistently tell me that they are not receiving the level of communication, clarity, or support from Sound Transit that they need to successfully navigate the impacts of light rail expansion.

I fully support the goals of the WSLE project, however, it must ensure that impacted businesses are not left behind in this process. Over the past year, I have heard repeatedly from small, independent, and family-owned businesses who describe the relocation process as opaque, inconsistent, and insufficient.

One business owner in my district recently shared their own account of these challenges. Their biggest concern related to a lack of process and transparency by Sound Transit. Sound Transit has been requiring businesses to relocate for several years – yet, according to many impacted businesses in the area, there is no clear process or communication.

I recognize the complexity of his work and the budget constraints that Sound Transit operates under. Still, the overwhelming feedback from businesses is that the current approach does not set them up for successful relocation or long-term operability. It is imperative that this experience for small businesses be improved.

Although relocations may still be months or years away, many businesses are eager to begin planning now. They are seeking clear guidance from Sound Transit on which early expenses will qualify for reimbursement. My office continues to hear concerns that Sound Transit has not yet provided a defined plan, timeline, or schedule outlining the reimbursable scope and costs. Respectfully, I urge you to provide this clarity urgently to help WSLE-impacted businesses plan responsibly and ensure a fair, well-organized, and transparent transition process that minimizes disruption and uncertainty.

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600 Fourth Avenue, Floor 2 | PO Box 34025, Seattle | Washington 98124-4025

Phone (206) 684-8801 **Fax** (206) 684-8587 **TTY** (206) 233-0025

Email rob.saka@seattle.gov

To that end, I am asking for your help in providing:

- A clear overview of how Sound Transit is currently supporting small businesses facing displacement, especially in SODO and North Delridge;
- Clarification on what specific relocation expenses are and are not covered under current policy; and
- A plan or timeline for improving communication and transparency with the City and regional stakeholders to support affected businesses.

My office is committed to ensuring that Sound Transit's work improves the economic situation in our neighborhoods and does not undermine small businesses, many of whom have been here for generations.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Saka". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Councilmember Rob Saka
Chair, Transportation Committee, Seattle City Council

cc: Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell
Seattle City Councilmember Dan Strauss