



December 27, 2013

Bellevue City Council
450 110th Avenue NE
P.O. Box 90012
Bellevue, WA 98009

Dear Council members,

The Bellevue business community is concerned about King County Metro's service reduction proposal which affects 28 of the 33 routes it operates in Bellevue. These potential cuts are proposed at a time when the need for improved bus service has never been greater. Bus travel to and from downtown Bellevue from employment centers to homes, and parts in between, helps employees, residents, and business patrons move Bellevue's economy forward.

During this time of financial uncertainty, where service cuts and fare hikes are distinct possibilities, it is imperative that that we have a consensus around a strategy for the most efficient way to distribute bus transportation resources. As an active participant in Bellevue's Transit Master Plan process at different levels of our organization we thank city staff for their outreach efforts to the business community. City staff has heard from many of our members in different settings on the importance of efficient mobility options and market-driven planning.

In May 2013 we testified in favor of the Bellevue Transit Master Plan's "Abundant Access" vision statement to the Bellevue City Council and we continue to advocate for robust bus service for all of Bellevue and the I-405 crescent. As we told the Council, we encourage the City of Bellevue to communicate strongly with King County Metro about the importance of encouraging long-term ridership growth which involves building capacity to meet future demand for transit service by: (i) providing service where there is anticipated to be high ridership; (ii) building and supporting Park & Ride facilities that help people access the transit system; (iii) improving the way people make transit connections so they can reach more destinations in less time; and, (iv) investing in enhancements such as transit priority measures and bus rapid transit.

The Chamber recognizes that the provision of cost-efficient and effective bus service necessitates making some difficult decisions. Moving toward the City of Bellevue's vision means maximizing the return on investment of limited resources which consequently has an impact on routes in Bellevue's lower density residential areas where service is less productive. After considering the difficult choices associated with a 17 percent service reduction, we suggest that if service cuts are necessary, Metro should reduce/eliminate low ridership routes before impacting service on Bellevue's most productive transit corridors.

We support the City's advocacy for robust bus service in Bellevue and the Eastside and will continue to communicate the messages we receive from our membership to you and our regional transportation agencies.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tom Sulewski'.

Tom Sulewski
Chairman of the Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Betty Nokes'.

Betty Nokes
President & CEO