

October 6, 2015

To the attention of King County's Transportation, Economy and Environment (TrEE) Committee

My name is Tracy Domingues. I represent the Montlake Community Council and the Montlake Neighborhood Greenways. I am here today in opposition of the elimination of the bus routes, 43 and 25, that serve the Montlake, Arboretum, and Portage Bay/Roanoke neighborhoods. Our neighborhoods strongly oppose the King County Proposal to eliminate bus routes #25 and #43 by March 2016.

A detailed explanation of why this proposal would cause a disservice and less safety for Montlake residents, has been put together by Montlake residents Lionel Job and Barbara Wright and presented on October 1st to Kamilah Brown, Aid to King County Councilmember Larry Gossett, and Bryndel Swift, Aid to King County Council Chair Larry Phillips. Their document also offers possible solutions to the problem.

Here are copies of the documents for your attention.

What I am about to read are some of the comments and complaints posted on the Montlake and NextDoor public forums by the residents of the Montlake, Arboretum and Portage Bay neighborhoods. You might have received most of these testimonies through e-mail and the King County online feedback form, but reading them aloud would make their voices louder and clearer.

- I take the 43 to the gym by REI three to five times a week. I already walk the last half mile because it's faster than taking two buses. If you cut the 43, there's no way I'm waiting at 23/John as I transfer from the 48 to take the 8 at 6:30 in the morning when I go to the gym. Seattle Police Department crime reports show that intersection has way more crime against property and individuals than where I currently take the bus. I'll drive my car and find parking by REI. Isn't this exactly what you don't want to happen?
- The #43 is the route my children can take to/from school, and a transfer from one line to the other is really not an option for a 12-year-old. If it goes away, I'll be driving every day...
- Proposition 1 which was passed last year was supposed to maintain bus service. Why are we even having this meeting? Isn't that what the tax

revenue increase was supposed to do? This sort of thing is exactly the reason why people don't trust politicians and why I am very likely to vote against further tax increases that are meant to serve transportation.

- I have long been a transit user and actively supported the transit increases. Now I find that my neighborhood will receive less service. My choices are to walk 1 mile to the Light Rail station or take route #48 and then transfer downtown. It will actually take me longer to get downtown than it currently does.
- The walk from mid-Montlake to the pedestrian overpass across from U Hospital and then to the Sound Transit station is not a reasonable walk for children, adults and seniors to make.
- We are currently a 1-car family, but if this route is eliminated we will certainly become a 2-car family.
- 1.15 mile walk or time and hassle of transferring busses will quite simply result in more SOV's in a neighborhood that is already plagued by impassable gridlock.
- Why are we having to "save" our neighborhood (Westside of Montlake, and Portage Bay) bus route seemingly every 6 or 12 months? We overwhelmingly passed a City initiative (Prop 1) last November for an increase in City taxes (0.1% sales tax plus additional \$60 vehicle tab fee, collected each year 2015-2020) slated not for some vague route "improvements", but primarily and specifically for restoring routes in Seattle proposed to be deleted by the County (Routes 25 and 43).
- Transferring from the #48 to the #11 at 23rd and Madison is dangerous! Drivers at that intersection are habitually "velocitized" and paying next to zero attention to pedestrians. It's a terrible intersection for pedestrians, and if they take away the #43 transferring there will be our only option for getting to most parts of Capitol Hill.

- My son got off the bus 48 today, crossed the crosswalk with the correct light and was almost taken out by a bicycle. The metro stops need to have more safety at 24th and Lake Washington Blvd.
- Please do not eliminate route #43! I have used it for over 30 years. It goes to all the places I need to go- Group Health, Safeway, and downtown. It will create a real hardship for me and my neighbors if it is eliminated. While I appreciate the new link light rail station to downtown, it does not travel to these other destinations.
- As a 30+ year resident of Montlake, I'm struck by the irony of the ads on the buses that tout more options and better service, while you are taking away the much used and incredibly convenient #43 route. I am excited about the light rail additions at Broadway and John, and the one in UW parking lot, BUT they do NOT replace the #43 for us folks who live along the 24th/23rd Avenue corridor.  
Please do not take away our ability to take a bus downtown with no transfers and only a couple of blocks walk. Especially in rainy and cold weather, waiting for transfers or walking a mile to the light rail is not good transportation service.  
If the goal is to encourage more people to use public transport, to create a city where everyone uses it (as in New York City or London or Paris, etc.), taking away the #43 is not the right direction to be going. In fact, it's likely to put more of us back into our cars.
- For those of us in Montlake and the Arboretum the loss of the 43 would mean taking TWO buses to get up to 15th Avenue East (Group Health, Safeway etc) with a transfer on 19th near Madison from the 48 to the 8 (not a great place to wait for another bus for 15 minutes in the dark and rain) and yet another bus (the 11, THREE BUSES) to get downtown. Once this change is made we will be stuck with this for a long time so please voice your opinions now if you want to prevent this. The small change recommended by Reg Newbeck would return the link between 19th and 23rd on Thomas/John and avoid the three bus trek!

- It makes no sense to eliminate the 43. Yes, the light rail will also go from the U-Dist to downtown "in only 8 minutes", but the light rail isn't going to cover the exact same route, which means we'll all have to take the time/another bus to actually GET to the light rail or downtown. It's ridiculous.
- I am a senior who has resided in Montlake for over 40 years and I have always taken Metro bus route 43 to get me directly, with one single bus, to my research position at the UW School of Medicine, to my medical health care facility at Group Health Capital Hill on 15th Avenue East, to grocery stores and drug stores on 15th Avenue East, to Broadway, and to downtown. For those of us who reside throughout Montlake and the Arboretum neighborhoods, anywhere east of 23rd and 24th Avenues East, the proposed elimination of Metro route 43 would be disastrous! It would require us to take TWO buses instead of one to get from 24th Avenue East to 15th Avenue East (Group Health, Safeway, QFC, etc) with a transfer necessitated to get from the 48 to the 8 on 19th near E. Madison (which is not a safe place to wait for another bus for 15 minutes in the dark and rain!!!). In addition, we would need to transfer to and take yet another bus (the 11, THREE BUSES) to get from Montlake to downtown. In essence, this proposed change neglects the public transportation needs of an entire neighborhood!!! I urge you to 1) maintain Route 43 OR 2) to restore the link between 23rd and 19th Avenue East along E John/Thomas so that we can continue to have access to all of the important places we need to go on a daily basis. And as a senior, please know that in the coming years the elimination of route 43 would make me completely dependent on cabs or personal vehicles.
- According to the Metro Trip Planner, from 23rd and Harrison, it takes 17 minutes to get to Westlake using the #43. If I have to take the #48 north to the light rail near UWMC, it takes 10 minutes according to Metro Trip Planner. Let's say I get lucky and catch the light rail perfectly. That will take 18 minutes to get downtown, which is fine. But, we all know how rare that will be. So worst case scenario, I have to wait 10 minutes for the light rail, which means it's 28 minutes, or 24 minutes if it's only a 6 minute wait. Not so ideal, but not totally awful. But wait, what if Montlake is a

mess? On Tuesday, it took me 34 minutes to get to the UWMC, today it was 25. Add another 18 minutes waiting for and taking the light rail, and that's a little over an hour for a trip that normally takes 17 minutes, maybe 25 if traffic is awful. What if the Montlake BRIDGE goes up? How many more minutes does that take?

- It takes us time and some amount of walking to get to the light rail station from Montlake near Boyer or south of that, especially during rush hour!! And the Capitol Hill stop is nowhere near 15th Ave E where I get health services and groceries! As a senior a 5 block walk in the dark and rain is not feasible.
- Taking the 48 and then waiting at E Madison near 19th in the cold or at night or in the rain or with groceries to transfer to another bus to get up to 15th Avenue East is a great loss to Montlake in terms of convenience, time and safety
- For those of us on Boyer/Fuhrman between the 5-way stop and the University Bridge, losing the #25 bus will leave some folks stranded (unless replaced with smaller Dart vehicles). I will be able to hike up the steep hill to the less convenient #49 bus at Roanoke & 10th Ave E (for now), but many who use the #25 to get to doctor appointments, downtown entertainment, the Airport Light Rail, etc. will be incapable of making the trek to Roanoke or Eastlake buses, and will find taxis a very pricey additional expense.
- The loss of Bus routes 43 and 25 combined with an interchange that will make foot access of the light rail station difficult needs to be addressed now. These routes must be maintained -at least until the effects of the interchange are experienced and understood.
- The University Village shopping center and Children's Hospital have grown enormously over the past five years, yet there is no direct public transit service to them from downtown, Capitol Hill, and Montlake. Why not keep the 43 bus and alter the route so that it proceeds from Husky Stadium to University Village and Children's? This would provide

needed direct access to these two important destinations, and potentially would remove many cars from the crowded Montlake corridor.

- Do not scrap the 43 route at all - at least not before it has been running in parallel with the future light rail service - for at least a year or more - before they could re-evaluate the necessity of having the 43 - speak in 2017 or 2018
- Every year, Seattle seems increasingly to care only about vehicular traffic, and moving it as fast as possible. Pedestrians must fend for themselves, dangerously, every day! We need to maintain the 43 to the U District!
- King County Metro Transit ignores the fact that the Montlake Bridge area is often very congested, and that the route 48 stops will be on NE Pacific Street in front of the University Hospital, not a particularly convenient or fast transfer to the Link entrance in the Husky stadium parking lot, and requiring street crossings, and the bus making the left turn onto NE Pacific St. It's unlikely that the loss of the 43 will result in time savings for anyone. Outside of rush hours it introduces the potential for Montlake Bridge openings. For those heading to the U-District, today there are 8-12 buses/hour, after the 43 is gone, there will be 6 buses/hour, so that's not an enhancement, either.
- We need a neighborhood transportation plan that is coordinated between the City, County and State. This should be a given, but it is not.
- Eliminating the 25 and 43 means that Montlake residents will be isolated from adjacent neighborhoods. This leaves us no good option to get from East Montlake to the Eastlake business district, over a mile away. Losing both the #25 and #43 would severely limit transport options for Montlake and Portage Bay residents to Capitol Hill, Eastlake and downtown. #25 is the route through our neighborhoods.
- The users of the 8, 10, 11, 12, 43 and 48 on Capitol Hill should be demanding that our County Council have a meeting that one can attend that is a transit friendly location like the Miller Community Center. We

need you to contact the County Council, since not all of have cars or the ability to get to the Meeting on Tuesday night the 6th

- Please listen to our community. This community has spent hours, weeks, years talking with, and writing to, WDOT & SDOT about the traffic and public transportation issues in Montlake; about congestion and speeds and difficulty navigating through our own neighborhood. It feels like WSDOT, SDOT, Metro and King and City Council just nod and go ahead and bulldoze through with what you want – to get people THROUGH this neighborhood – rather than think about the impacts on those of us trying to get around our neighborhood. The new Sound Transit station is basically a hub that serves the University of Washington. It doesn't really help people north of UW who are trying to get downtown (where's a stop at Sound Transit??), or the Montlake neighborhood get downtown or to northeast Seattle (University Village? Children's Hospital?). We need the city and county to stop thinking that people are only going to the University District or downtown. We need the city and county to cease thinking of Montlake/Portage Bay/Roanoke as an area to only get THROUGH, and start thinking of how residents get around.

1. We need a neighborhood transportation plan that is coordinated between the City, County and State. This should be a given.
2. It is not safe to walk from Montlake to the Light Rail Station. And about 80% of Montlake residents have over a one mile walk to the Station. Eliminating the current bus service and relying on Light Rail is not a good option for Montlake residents.
3. The 48 bus, recommended to reach Light Rail, will be stuck in the same traffic backups on Montlake Blvd and 24<sup>th</sup> Ave E that all the cars are stuck in.
4. Taking the 48 and transferring at Capitol Hill to get downtown from Montlake is a huge service cut and taking Light Rail will not be faster.
5. Eliminating the 25 and 43 means that Montlake residents will be isolated from adjacent neighborhoods with no good option to get from East Montlake to the Eastlake business district, over a mile away.
6. Eliminating the eastside bus service stop at Montlake is yet another disservice, not only to Eastside commuters to UW, but a huge disservice to Montlake residents travelling downtown.
7. Where is the transit option for a Montlake resident travelling to University Village? Children's Hospital? This is an important transportation corridor, yet no bus services this route.
8. We need a traffic speed and safety mitigation plan for Boyer Ave E and Fuhrman Ave E. Both streets are increasingly travelled arterials, biking streets and, more importantly, a neighborhood street. Speeding and backups are increasing, drivers are frustrated, cyclists and pedestrians are concerned about their safety
9. We need speed and safety mitigation on our side streets, increasingly used to zip through the neighborhood during increasingly frequent and extended traffic backups. WAZE currently routes cars past our elementary school!

Please listen to our community that has spent hours, weeks, years talking with, and writing to, WDOT & SDOT about the traffic and public transportation issues in Montlake; about congestion and speeds and difficulty navigating through our own neighborhood.

We need the city and county to cease thinking of Montlake/Portage Bay/Roanoke as an area to only get THROUGH, and start thinking of how residents get around.

To: Mr Kevin Desmond, General Manager King County Metro  
 From: Dolores Mirabella  
 Subject: Elimination of the #43 Bus Route  
 Date: October 6, 2015

I recently learned of the planned elimination of the #43 bus route. I was shocked given the passage of Proposition I, which supposedly provides funds for improving mass transit.

I live on 24<sup>th</sup> Ave. E. between E. Lee and E. Galer. I am 71 years old and difficulty walking, and I frequently take the # 43 to Group Health or downtown. This elimination of the #43 will, in fact, be a hardship for me and the many others who rely on this route for direct service. I know that Ms. Barbara Wright has sent you an email outlining her concerns (and the concerns of all of us who rely on the #43), and that you responded to those concerns.

In your September 18<sup>th</sup> email response to her, you stated that “we conducted a nine-month outreach that involved the public in many ways.” Well, I’m amazed. As one who will be directly and negatively affected by this change of service, I will tell you that no one “reached out” to me. Upon further discussion with my neighbors, no one “reached out” to any of them. I question who those “thousands of people” were whom you supposedly contacted.

Ironically, you open your email with this statement: “We strive to give your community the best service possible...” You go on to offer numerous alternative for reaching Capitol Hill and downtown destination. All of them, unfortunately, require either taking two busses (the solution for those living near Aloha and 23<sup>rd</sup>), or taking the #48 to connect to Link light rail for a quick 8 minute trip downtown.

Do you have any idea how time-consuming and difficult these alternatives are? You even stated that “depending on where you start your trip in Montlake, Route 48 and Link light rail will get you downtown faster than the current Route 43, even though you would travel north in the beginning.”

Here is the reality: I live less than a mile from the Montlake Cut. In the past week on four separate trips, it has taken me between 15 and 30 minutes to get across the bridge to access the on-ramp to I-5. The times of day vary, but generally the hours are between 8:30 and 10:30 a.m., or in the evenings between 3:30 and 7:00. The Montlake Cut is a nightmare, and the #48 bus route will be stuck in these delays. Walk in the dark or in the rain from the bus stop to the Link light rail station is frightening.

**The Current #43**

**The #48 and Link Rail**

Wait for bus (5 minutes), get on bus and pay fare	Wait for bus (5 minutes), get on bus and pay fare.
Transit to Group Health (15minutes) or downtown (25 minutes)	Transit to the Montlake station (5minutes, 15 minutes or 30 minutes, depending on traffic.)
Get off the bus	Walk to Link light rail station (10 minutes)
<b>Total Time : 30 minutes</b>	Wait for train (5 – 10 minutes)
	Board train and pay 2 <sup>nd</sup> fare.
	Transit to downtown (8 minutes!)
	Get off train in tunnel. Where? Is it safe?
	Walk to my destination (How long? How far?)
	<b>Total time: Minimally 38 minutes, more likely, 45 minutes</b>

Any reasonable person can conclude which of the two options is in the public interest. In your September 18<sup>th</sup> email to Ms. Wright (cited above), you claim again: “ Our goal in redesigning bus service in Capitol Hill and northeast Seattle is to serve you better. We want to get people to Link for its fast, frequent service.”

While I appreciate the detailed response you gave to Ms Wright’s concerns, the plan, which looks good on paper, in no way serves us better. I urge you and the King County Council, to continue the #43 bus route. That, indeed, will serve us better.

Thank you.