



Seattle Subway August 2021 Primary Endorsements

Our August 2021 Primary endorsements are finally ready! Just in time, with ballots dropping today. We tried to gather as much information as we could by hosting forums ([Position 9 & Mayoral](#)), sending out questionnaires ([City](#) & [County](#)), and keeping in mind track records and our prior meetings with candidates during our constant advocacy work. We endorsed the following candidates who will appear on your August 3rd Primary ballot because we felt they rose above the rest when we simplified things and asked ourselves: who are the one or two very best candidates for transit in each race? Endorsements here don't necessarily mean other candidates aren't strong in their own right, but we felt they had further to go to become our best transit champions. Don't forget to mail your ballot before August 3rd or drop your ballot in a dropbox before 8:00pm on August 3rd. We will also update these endorsements for the General Election in November.

Summary of Primary Endorsements:

Seattle Mayor: Andrew Grant Houston and Jessyn Farrell

Seattle City Council, Citywide, Position 8: Teresa Mosqueda

Seattle City Council, Citywide, Position 9: Nikkita Oliver and Brianna Thomas

King County Executive: Dow Constantine and Joe Nguyen

Seattle Mayor: Andrew Grant Houston and Jessyn Farrell

Picking candidates to endorse out of this field of very good urbanism, land use, and transportation candidates wasn't easy. This is a good problem to have, but only two can make it through to the next round, so tough choices are necessary. After reviewing and re-reviewing forums, questionnaires, and track records, two candidates rose above the rest when we simplified things and asked ourselves: who are the very best mayoral candidates for transit; and from those, who made strong commitments to a universal grade-separated rail system on the fastest possible timeline?

Andrew Grant Houston is an exceptional transit candidate. He even put together his own [Seattle rail vision map](#) that makes [our vision](#) look modest in comparison. His forum performance and answers to our questionnaire put his deep understanding of policy issues on display. His long range vision sounds almost like we wrote it: "In the next 20 years, we should expand transit so that every Seattleite is within a mile of a light-rail station and within a quarter mile of a bus stop that has service that is more frequent than every 15-minutes for a majority of the day." His goals are our goals. **Vote Houston.**

Jessyn Farrell is an excellent transit candidate as well. Her resume runs deep. Long time transit advocate, former head of Transportation Choices Coalition, Farrell pushed for and won ST3 funding when she was in the State Legislature. Farrell has the most state legislative experience

and would be a great advocate for Seattle's transit future, she would be great at passing [HB 1304](#) through the state legislature. She has the deep knowledge and experience required to help our city make serious progress and her vision also looks a bit like something we might have written: "For far too long, Seattle has played catch-up on transportation instead of leading the way. We need a transportation system that provides people with equitable, safe, reliable, affordable and climate-friendly travel choices." We couldn't agree more. **Vote Farrell.**

There are two other candidates who were strong contenders for our endorsement: Council President M. Lorena González and Colleen Echohawk. González has been a consistent vote for transit on the city council, pitched in to support our [HB 1304](#), and would have earned our endorsement in most candidate fields. There were just two answers in the forums and questionnaires that caused us some concern. She was a no/maybe on ensuring the city makes its own plan to identify citywide Link rail corridors to prepare for a future ST4 and she seemed to take Sound Transit's current realignment process as a given rather than something to fight. These are both critically important short-term priorities for our organization that have huge long-term consequences.

We really liked Echohawk's answers on land use and her focus on bus improvements for all users and uses, not just typical 9 to 5 commuters. On land use she said "...I support ending exclusionary zoning to allow for duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in every neighborhood" with which we whole-heartedly agree. Our concerns came down to her "no" on expediting the update to Seattle's Transit Master plan to explicitly include a Link by next year.

In the case of both González and Echohawk, we're splitting hairs somewhat. It's clear that both are very good transit candidates and would bring the right values on issues we care about to the Mayor's office should they win.

That said, two candidates elevated above the rest on the issues nearest and dearest to us: Expansion of Seattle's transit system, high quality Link rail expansion in particular. **Vote Farrell or Houston.**

Seattle City Council, Citywide, Position 8: Teresa Mosqueda

Teresa Mosqueda is one of the loudest advocates of any candidate in this election cycle pushing to give the City of Seattle more equitable access to faster transit. She has supported us in our efforts to get state authority to fund citywide exclusive right-of-way rail to connect most Seattle neighborhoods with Link, and she has supported our efforts to budget for the creation of a City-level masterplan for light rail corridors. Mosqueda had many accomplishments during this current term. But there is one vote that we didn't win that we want to mention here: we can't thank Mosqueda enough for her vote in support of maximizing revenues in the Seattle Transportation Benefit District renewal, which voters passed with over 80% voting yes. If we and Mosqueda had successfully increased the funding in the STBD renewal, we wouldn't have had



as many cuts to transit service. We always look forward to agreeing with Teresa Mosqueda on the next transportation and land use issue to come up, and our only wish is for more Teresa Mosquedas on the Seattle City Council. **Vote Mosqueda.**

Seattle City Council, Citywide, Position 9: Nikkita Oliver and Brianna Thomas

Nikkita Oliver said climate is an issue that impacts every aspect of civic life, from transportation, to housing, to labor, to accessibility, which makes the relative lack of action unacceptable. They recognize that Seattle voters are hungry to push the pace with respect to transit. Oliver wants to continue to pursue HB 1304 and similar legislation for transit. While they waffled in the forum out of concern for regional connections, in our questionnaire they said “yes” that they will ensure Seattle’s plan to connect every neighborhood with Sound Transit-operated light rail is written by the end of 2022; and “yes” in their capacity as a city council member they will work with Sound Transit to ensure ST3 is built with future expansion in mind. ST4 here we come! **Vote Oliver.**

Brianna Thomas relies on King County Metro’s C Line for her transportation needs to and from West Seattle. She believes all Seattleites should have access to a transit system that is fast, reliable, multimodal, convenient, and accessible regardless of each person’s location or physical ability. Thomas has been working as a City Council staffer to advance important transportation issues including the Seattle Transportation Benefit District renewal. While she unfortunately waffled in the forum about the City creating its own plan to connect every neighborhood with Sound Transit-operated light rail in favor of waiting until the region is someday ready to move forward on such a discussion; she does hope that City can partner with King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties for a future ST4, and she looks forward to a King County-wide transit ballot measure in 2024. **Vote Thomas.**

King County Executive: Dow Constantine and Joe Nguyen

There is literally no way we weren’t going to endorse Dow Constantine for King County Executive. His resume on transit and his history on the Sound Transit Board are exemplary. He fought for, and won, an expanded ST3 package during ST3 planning in 2016. He led the charge to pass ST3 in 2016. During his long tenure on the Sound Transit board and as the Executive over King County Metro one theme has come through loud and clear: Dow Constantine prioritizes transit riders when he makes decisions. **Vote Constantine.**

We are also huge fans of Joe Nguyen. During his short tenure with the state legislature he has already made his mark as a serious pro transit voice. He worked with us to advance [HB 1304](#) last year. He brings [the perspective](#) of someone who has had to rely on transit in parts of King County where transit access isn’t great. The way forward for transit? “I’ll staunchly reject failed



policies of austerity and lead the country on investing our way out of the economic fallout from the pandemic.” Music to our ears. **Vote Nguyen.**

That's it for the August 2021 Primary Election. Don't forget to mail your ballot before August 3rd or drop your ballot in a dropbox before 8:00pm on August 3rd. We will update these endorsements for the General Election in November.

