

Mayor Michael McGinn, City of Seattle
Councilmember Richard Council, City of Seattle
Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, City of Seattle
Diane Sugimura, Director, Seattle Department of Planning and Development
Marshall Foster, Planning Director, City of Seattle
Honorable Dow Constantine, King County
Council Bob Ferguson, King County
Ron Endlich, North Link Deputy Project Director, Sound Transit
Gary Prince, Senior Project Manager Transit Oriented Development, King County

The Pinehurst Community Council represents the Pinehurst neighborhood immediately north of the Northgate urban center. Pinehurst is bounded on the south by Northgate Way, on the west by 5th Ave NE, on the north by NE 130th St and on the east by Lake City Way. Due to our geographic location, Pinehurst is closely vested in and impacted by changes that are being made in Northgate.

The Pinehurst Community Council feels scarce funds are best used getting people to the Northgate Transit Center and the light rail station. It is especially important to get people across the I-5 freeway that awkwardly bisects the area and makes connections to the surrounding neighborhoods difficult. The community has long wanted a pedestrian/bicycle bridge across I-5, as is included in Seattle's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans. North Seattle Community College is one of the top five attended colleges in the city (with 6,855 students in Fall 2010), but it is currently more than a circuitous mile-long walk from the campus to the Northgate Transit Center. A bridge at the transit center would shorten this considerably.

Pinehurst Community Council realizes that resources are limited and believes that along with the pedestrian bridge it is important to focus on the many bus routes in the area that will be affected by the arrival of Link Light Rail. Many of our local routes (including routes 41, 73 and 77) currently serve Downtown directly and are obvious candidates to terminate at Northgate Transit Center when light rail service starts. Routes like these could become circulator routes to get people to the transit station. Longer term plans could include a streetcar between Northgate and Lake City to connect the only Urban Village in Northeast Seattle to the main Urban Center and Link Light Rail. There is a lot of support for a streetcar, and the connection between Lake City and Northgate was also identified in the Transit Master Plan as being a priority route for future transit investment.

After discussing this issue within our neighborhood, Pinehurst Community Council respectfully opposes prioritizing a publicly owned parking garage at the Northgate Transit Center. We believe that there are higher priorities for both Sound Transit and King County Metro to focus resources on as part of the North Link expansion and the long term plans for the Northgate Urban Center. We need quick easy access to the station so more people will choose alternatives to driving. There are other short and long term solutions to meet parking demand, and as the light rail expands north, the usage and demands will change.

The Pinehurst Community looks forward to the opening of Link Light Rail in Northgate and to working with the City of Seattle, Sound Transit and King County to ensure the most efficient and most livable outcomes from the enormous investment being made in our community.