

Alexa Leach

From: John Niles <jniles@endofdriving.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 8:09 AM
To: Alexa Leach
Subject: Better Format replacement Written Comment from John Niles, Smarter Transit for TPB meeting today
Attachments: Niles, Better Format, SmarterTransit Comments for PSRC TPB, May 11, 2026.pdf

You don't often get email from jniles@endofdriving.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

See attached. IF TIMELY, ATTACHED is replacement for previous send with better formatting. I'm signed up for a two minute verbal summary comment as well.

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John S. Niles

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New 2nd edition book I co-authored: *The End of Driving: Automated Cars, Sharing vs Owning, and the Future of Mobility*

Free preview of book at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/book/monograph/9780443223921/the-end-of-driving>

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Good morning,

This is a public comment for the June 11 meeting of the PSRC Transportation Policy Board, pertinent to the discussion on the Transportation Work Program, agenda item 8, from John Niles. I'm a 43 year Seattle resident, an independent transportation policy analyst, co-author of the End of Driving 2nd edition textbook, and off-campus Research Associate of San Jose State University for whom I've produced a half-dozen government funded reports.

I'm speaking here as co-chair of Puget Sound's Smarter Transit educational-activist focused on affordable, public transportation alternatives to building those Sound Transit ST3 train tracks that cost billions per mile that some elected leaders hope will be financed with 75 year loans eventually paid off by your grandchildren.

We at Smarter Transit urge the future transportation work program of PSRC to review carefully the statistical performance trends over time showing up in the historical record of successive Regional Transportation Plans -- that's the RTP -- for example, the 2018 and 2022 versions of the RTP in addition to the latest 2026 version approved by the PSRC General Assembly on May 28.

I'll extract a few points Smarter Transit delivered to the attention of that General Assembly in a Public Comment and now easily found by asking Google a request similar to: Show me the public comment from Smarter Transit to the recent PSRC General Assembly. Don't put quote marks around your ask.

Point one, the 2050 Sound Transit light rail ridership regional trip market share fell from 3% in the 2022 version of the RTP down to 2% in the 2026 version.

Point two, across all three most recent RTPs, from the 2014 baseline out to the most recent 2050 forecast regional car trip daily growth beats transit trip daily growth by 18 to 1, assuming the budget deficit problem of Sound Transit can be solved.

Smarter Transit also recommends Transportation Policy Board push the PSRC staff to take a more critical look at the implications arising from comparison of data from sources of different agencies. Other trends in performance over time show up in data sources like the Journey to Work performance measurement surveys of the Census Bureau and performance measures in the FTA's National Transit Database.

Point three: Example of multiple source data usage: The transit market share of all personal trips in 2040 was forecast to be 6.4% in the 2018 RTP. However, in the 2026 RTP, the transit

market share projection for 2050 is 4.7% for all transit modes, a drop that recognizes some work at home introduced in the Covid pandemic will likely continue. Census data shows Journey to Work times in central Puget Sound region have recently been increasing year over year. Is there a relationship here to the consumer quest for affordable housing further out from center city?

Point four: As a final example of numbers from multiple sources for PSRC to examine. Sound Transit claims that its transit-oriented development (TOD) program, creating new homes near light rail stations, to date has built or is planning to build 3,726 homes. This number contributes only 1.4% of the forecast 267,700 household growth near public transit needing achievement by 2035 according to PSRC in the 2026 RTP. Worrisome?

Democracy works best with robust, fact-based, data-based conversations. I'm always ready to engage with PSRC.

Thanks for consideration.

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John S. Niles

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