

**Statement of Sound Transit CEO Peter Rogoff
March 1, 2018**

My last two years of service to the people of the Puget Sound region have seen many accomplishments by Sound Transit. Over this period, I have been honored to lead an outstanding staff as we achieved results for commuters and taxpayers across the region.

My recent performance review process included not only my work during 2017 but revisited some concerns stemming from my first five months at Sound Transit in early 2016. During this initial very intense period, I was brand new to the region and to the agency. In the winter and spring, we were assembling a ballot measure that would establish the largest transit expansion program in the United States. At the same time we opened the University Link light rail extension, the largest single expansion of service in the agency's history.

There is no question that I had important lessons to learn about transitioning to a new environment and way of doing business. Prior to coming to Sound Transit, I was accustomed to working in environments where, when you were producing a major piece of work at the core of the agency's mission, it was "all hands on deck, 24/7." And, in the months and days leading up to the release of the ST3 plan, I'm proud to say that the overwhelming majority of the Sound Transit staff had exactly that same attitude. I was pleased with the agency's accomplishments during this time, and my early feedback included considerable enthusiasm among some employees over having a clear vision and direction from the top. An employee survey conducted in March of that year reflected an extremely high level of staff morale, with critically important improvements in interagency communication.

That said, this early period was also very challenging. That same employee survey included some responses that were critical of my initial management approach, including my language and overall office demeanor. This and other feedback affirmed that my directness and unvarnished clarity did not sit well with some staff. I periodically used profanity in the workplace and, at times, was overly intense in articulating my expectations for performance.

These concerns were significant enough to merit a meeting with the then Board chair and the two vice chairs in June, 2016. They articulated clear expectations for my performance in these areas going forward. I took their direction as an important wake-up call. I obtained a Seattle executive coach and significantly transformed the means by which I seek to achieve results within the agency.

Since that meeting 21 months ago in June of 2016, I have worked aggressively, and I believe, successfully, to re-tool my workplace demeanor. I'm grateful to the then-chair and vice chairs for their quick and productive response, their support for hiring the executive coach, and their desire to address this issue 21 months ago so that these initial missteps could be corrected rapidly. Since that time, I continue to seek and respond to feedback from staff members and others.

As part of my performance assessment, you have reviewed a document that purports to catalog missteps from January to May of 2016, which all occurred before I met with the Board leadership and took decisive steps to correct things. As I have mentioned before, some of the assertions on the list reflect the realities of the adjustment period I was going through when I first arrived at the agency. Other entries on this document I believe to be misquoted, misunderstood, mischaracterized or false. I don't yell at people. I don't disparage small city mayors and I don't shove furniture to make a point. I certainly respect the rights of the public and press to know the details of my salary. My salary has been a matter of public record in each of the last 31 years of my career. I was shocked to read some of the characterizations on this list just as you must have been when it surfaced.

Just as Sound Transit is an agency that strives for continuous improvement, I too seek to continually improve my performance based on new inputs and challenges. As such, I embrace the Board's latest direction and will continue to work with staff and Board Members to become an even more effective leader. My workplace demeanor in early 2016 was the wrong approach. I take full responsibility for it. I apologize to the Board for it today just as I apologized for it during my 2016 performance review.

Please know that I am strongly committed to maintaining the highest standards of professional conduct, and to work collaboratively with staff across our agency as we stay focused on delivering projects and services for the region's residents. Our agency has taken bold and decisive steps to organize itself for simultaneously expanding regional transit to the north, south, east and west. The agency has undergone a lot of changes in the last two years – changes that are absolutely necessary if we are to fulfill our commitment to the region's voters. We have streamlined our project management strategies with focus on successfully delivering projects on aggressive timelines, with intensified and earlier collaboration with local jurisdictions and residents.

These changes haven't all come easily. And changes can be especially hard on people when they need to be implemented quickly. Staff across Sound Transit are dedicated to achieving results on behalf of our residents, and I remain humbled by the opportunity to lead them.