Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce



October 7, 2021

SOUND TRANSIT TRANSFORMS TRAVEL IN NORTH SEATTLE

In the next three years, the light rail network will nearly triple from 26 miles to 62, and from 25 stations to 50.



PHOTOS FROM SOUND TRANSIT

ast weekend, Sound Transit opened three new light rail stations at Northgate, Roosevelt and the U District, forever transforming travel to and from

North Seattle. But as important as this opening was, it's just a taste of what's to come. In the next three years, the light rail network will nearly triple from 26



and from 25 stations to 50.

In 2022, we will welcome six new stations in Tacoma, extending service from downtown Tacoma to the Stadium and Hilltop neighborhoods. In 2023, light rail will cross Interstate 90 and serve 10 new stations in Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue and Redmond. Then in 2024, we'll extend north with four new stations in Mountlake Terrace, Shoreline

and Lynnwood; extend south with three new stations in Kent, Des Moines and Federal Way; and extend east with two additional stations in Redmond.

These expansions cannot come soon enough. Our region is growing quickly, is stuck in traffic, and is facing the climate crisis. Fast, reliable transit helps solve each of these problems, and our region desperately needs it.

The Northgate extension changes the game for thousands of people in our region. Riders will enjoy reliable 13-minute trips from Northgate to downtown Seattle. Trips from Northgate to the University District will take just 5 minutes. Getting from the University District to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport will take just 44 minutes.

Building the project was a major undertaking, including boring 3.5 miles of tunnels with two 600-ton tunnel boring machines, excavating 500,000 cubic yards of soil and installing 7,352 concrete tunnel liner rings.



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The project also includes some unprecedented innovation to protect sensitive research at the University of Washington from noise and vibration. Sound Transit designed and installed 1,600 extra-dense concrete slabs that rest on custom-built rubber pads, minimizing vibration and electromagnetic interference.

Despite all these challenges, including a construction pause during the early days of the pandemic, Northgate Link is coming in about \$50 million under budget. The \$1.9 billion project also greatly benefited from \$615 million in low-interest federal loans, saving local taxpayers millions in financing costs.

Northgate Link is more than just a major transit project, though. It connects people to opportunity, and it connects neighborhoods and communities to each other. As just one example, a new bicycle and pedestrian bridge at Northgate, built by the Seattle Department of Transportation, now reconnects North Seattle College and neighborhoods west of Interstate 5 with Northgate Station.

The new stations will also include new transit-oriented communities, with a mix of affordable and market-rate housing, jobs and businesses. Next year, nonprofit developers Bellwether and Mercy Housing will open Cedar Crossing, a 254-unit housing development next to Roosevelt Station. To date, 2,100 homes have been built or are in progress near Sound Transit light rail stations, and more than 70% of these are permanently affordable.

As the only 100% carbon-free light rail system in the country,

our wind- and hydro-powered trains will eventually offset 790,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually. Meeting the challenges of climate change requires that we decarbonize our transportation system, and light rail is leading the way.

Last weekend's celebration was also a moment to thank the 22,500 women and men who have given 14.4 million labor hours to build Sound Transit projects to date. We are proud to be employing a diverse workforce while also training the workforce of the future. People of color have performed 32% of our labor hours on Sound Transit projects, and women have performed 7% of the labor hours, both of which are well above the national average.

The Northgate Link Extension and future extensions also are true examples of the Biden administration's Build Back Better agenda. We're building green, climate-resilient infrastructure, developing the diverse skilled workforce of the future, building transit-oriented communities, and making travel faster and more reliable for the people of our region.

Despite all the progress we celebrated last weekend and the openings we anticipate over the next three years, we're just getting started. Voters have approved further extensions to Tacoma, Everett, Ballard, West Seattle, Issaquah and Kirkland. Ultimately, we will have a 252-mile system of light rail, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit serving the people of our region.

A leading transit executive for more than a decade, Peter Rogoff has been the CEO of Sound Transit since 2016, where he has been overseeing the largest transit expansion program in North America.

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ON THE COVER

U District Station is one of three new stations on Northgate Link.

PHOTO FROM SOUND TRANS

NORTHGATE LINK EXTENSION TEAM

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TOD AND THE QUEST TO DESIGN A MORE LIVABLE CITY

Transit-oriented development provides a way of organizing dense neighborhoods that's as appealing as it is responsible.





BY BRIAN Runberg

CONSTANZA Marcheselli

RUNBERG ARCHITECTURE GROUP

8

he Seattle-Bellevue Metropolitan area is facing an urgent question: How do we accommodate the estimated 1.8 million people that the Puget Sound Regional Council projects will arrive in the region between now and 2050?

The pressure is on today to ensure that the region remains livable and sustainable for current and new residents to avoid overwhelming existing infrastructure, to both shepherd growth in a way that aligns with newly adopted energy targets and sustainability goals, and to prevent already skyrocketing rents from rising even higher and pushing lower-income residents further out of our cities.

With so many competing demands, how do we approach development with thoughtful care, not expediency, as the driving imperative? How do we create neighborhoods that are equal parts functional, sustainable, appealing, and responsive to their respective context?

To answer this question, planning authorities throughout our region have had the foresight and vision to implement the practices of transit-oriented development (TOD), a way of organizing dense urban neighborhoods that's as appealing as it is responsible.

HEALTHIER, BETTER CONNECTED

TOD aims to group life in such a way that the neighborhood becomes a hub for most daily activities, centered around easyto-navigate, mixed-use developments that give residents the flexibility to walk, bike, or take public transportation to the majority of their destinations. According to the Transit Oriented Development Institute, TODs can reduce driving by as much as 85%, resulting in a whole host of benefits for communities and their residents, including lowered carbon footprint, easier commutes, and less traffic con-

In a nutshell, TODs tend to be vibrant, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods that combine multifamily residences, entertainment options, and commercial and office space all within half a mile of light rail or streetcars.

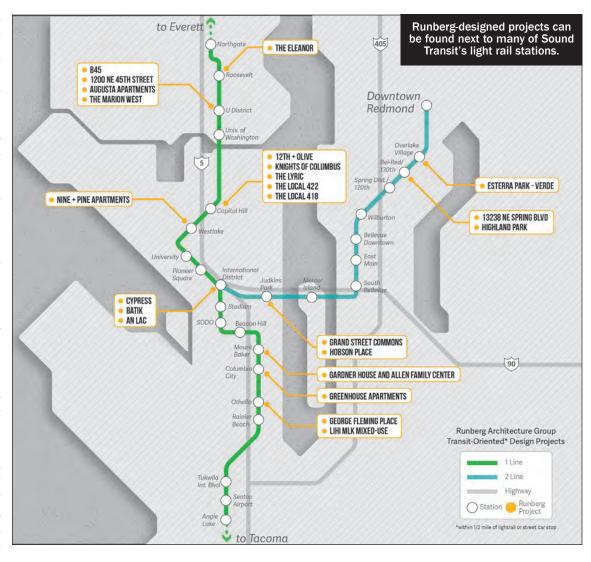
It's also not a new concept — in cities throughout Europe, such as Copenhagen and Paris, TODs have long demonstrated an ideal planning strategy for accommodating increased density in urban development. Here in the U.S., TOD has been on the rise for decades. Since light rail was first introduced in the nation's capital in 1976, dozens of TODs have been constructed along the area's six Metro lines, both downtown and in the surrounding suburbs of Maryland and Virginia.

THE RISE OF LOCAL TOD

In our corner of the nation, we're late to the game. However, we're now starting to realize the benefits from our current wave of new transit-oriented development across the greater Seattle-Bellevue region. The Northgate Link Extension, renamed to the "1 Line", opened its doors to passengers for the first time last weekend. It's part of Sound Transit's plan to triple the area's light rail between now and 2024, with additional stations planned for East King County, Tacoma, Lynnwood, and Federal Way. Wherever you travel in the region, it's hard not to see this growth. This exciting period of expansion gives area leaders the chance to not only shepherd the region's growth in a sustainable way, but to improve quality of life for countless residents.

Areas such as the Bel-Red neighborhood, situated between downtown Bellevue and Redmond's Overlake neighborhood, are already under development in anticipation of this expansion. Environmental enhancements — including expansion of green spaces, riparian corridors, and improved stormwater management — are central to the design, in keeping with the neighborhood's commitment to sustainability. Mixed-use properties, public art, a planned arts district, and playful design will contribute to the neighborhood's distinct character, transforming an area more recently known for its underutilized warehouses and disused industrial facilities into a vibrant community and commercial center.

As the design firm behind Verde at Esterra Park, as well as 13238 N.E. Spring Boulevard, Runberg Architecture Group is proud to be part of this vision. 13238 N.E. Spring Boulevard,



which will break ground this fall, is a 249-unit project adjacent to the upcoming Bel-Red light rail station. The building's massing and design reference the neighborhood's industrial past while simultaneously looking to the future. Wide sidewalks, bike lanes, and recessed stoops at grade create a neighborhood feel, while two metal-clad volumes at the building's base establish a common vocabulary between the lobby and the neighboring light rail station.

Likewise, Verde, a 634-unit residential development just south of the Microsoft campus, is designed to highlight the property's unique topography. The development, which abuts a lush, 2.6-acre park, sensitively shapes the site's challenging grade into a celebrated feature, with unique stepping of the building masses mimicking the natural landforms and patterns of the Sammamish Valley. It will also be one of the first LEED zero certified properties in Washington state, a new level of achievement in green building. The result - an ecofriendly, multifamily property that gives the impression of having risen out of the park, fully formed is utterly unique.

In our design, the team strived to build on what was already present to define a distinct sense of place that will change and evolve along with the neighborhood, all within 200 yards of Overlake Station. Slated for completion in the summer of 2022, we're confident that the result will be human centered, aesthetically pleasing, and memorable. That type of design alchemy creates a neighborhood that's greater than the sum of its parts. Not just a practical response to the region's explosive growth, but the kind of place where people want to be. That is the magic of TOD and why we believe it's the future of sustainable and responsive development, both here in Washington and in urban centers

across the country.

Over the last decade, Runberg has designed 23 such TOD projects throughout the region, totaling 4,900 units and approximately \$1.2 billion in construction. By tracing the paths of the forthcoming and existing transit lines in the Seattle area one can see how TODs can address the pressing need for increased housing density while making neighborhoods livelier and more appealing.



IMAGES FROM RUNBERG ARCHITECTURE GROUP

Lively, like B45, adjacent to the historic Neptune Theatre and just steps away from the University

LIVABLE CITY — PAGE 7

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES WITH EQUITABLE TRANSIT

New light rail stations are acting as catalysts for equitable development.

ewitt is proud to be the architect for Sound Transit's new Roosevelt and Northgate light rail stations. The two stations, along with U District Station, are opening on the 4.3-mile Northgate Link Extension as part of the newly expanded 1 Line.

This project is transformative on many levels. It provides



BY LEAH EPHREM HEWITT ARCHITECTS

transportation options communities providing equity and opportunity; provides access employment, education. and recreation; alleviates trafcongestion; and cuts

emissions and air pollution. The Northgate Link project is a carefully orchestrated collaborative effort between the owner, architects, planners, engineers, stakeholders, and the community. We feel privileged to be a part of this collective endeavor and to see it become an integral part of our city's equitable infrastructure.

By providing connections between light rail and other mobility options, Northgate and Roosevelt stations become deeply integrated multimodal transportation hubs, acting as catalysts for equitable development and improving connections with downtown Seattle, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, and other regional destinations. As transit users ourselves, our team approaches station design by carefully considering user experience to ensure the stations we design are accessible by all people and integrated within the broader neighborhood

ROOSEVELT STATION

Sited in a well-established neighborhood, Roosevelt Station has significantly driven the increased growth of housing even before the station construction was completed. The underground station has two entrances, one on Northeast 67th Street and the other on Northeast 65th Street, along 12th Avenue Northeast near Roosevelt High School. Each station entrance includes elevator, escalator, and stairs to ensure direct and seamless access to the station platform.

Trips from Roosevelt to downtown Seattle take just 10 minutes, and local bus routes stop at the station to facilitate convenient transfers. Bicyclists arriving via 12th Avenue and 65th Street have a smooth transition to the bicycle storage facility at the station entrance.

A plaza along Northeast 66th Street provides a welcoming space with passenger amenities including seating, bicycle parking, landscaping, and public art. R&R Studio's colorful 49-foot-tall "Building Blocks" sculpture is a dominant centerpiece of the plaza and will become a landmark feature for the neighborhood.

The station has been carefully designed to respond to the character of the Roosevelt community by ensuring the scale and massing of the station entrance buildings are compatible with their surrounding context. The signage from the former Standard Radio building has been salvaged and reinstalled above the ticket vending machines at the south station entrance, maintaining a connection to the neighborhood history.

neighborhood history.

A highly anticipated project many years in the making, the impact Roosevelt Station will have on future development in the neighborhood is already apparent, including potential affordable housing.

NORTHGATE STATION, GARAGE

Northgate Station is the northern terminus station for Sound Transit's 1 Line until the Lynnwood Link Extension opens, expanding service towards Everett. The elevated station acts as a major transit center and is the connection point for many regional and local bus routes. Light rail trips take just 13 minutes between Northgate and downtown Seattle.

Northgate Station is sensibly sited along First Avenue Northeast, cantilevering over the right of way. The station acts as a buffer to mitigate traffic noise, becomes a visual barrier to Interstate 5, and helps achieve a more pleasant pedestrian experience, catalyzing future development and helping to stitch together a community currently divided by the freeway.

Seattle Department of Transportation's John Lewis Memorial Bridge connects the portion of the neighborhood west of I-5, including North Seattle College, with Northgate Station's mezzanine level. The bridge helps overcome the barrier of the freeway by offering pedestrians and cyclists a safe and convenient means of accessing the station.

The station has two fully accessible entrances, one on either

EQUITABLE TRANSIT — PAGE 7



IMAGES BY HEWITT ARCHITECTS



BUILDING A 'SHIP IN A BOTTLE, THROUGH A STORM DRAIN'

U District and Roosevelt stations required coordination, creativity and lots of concrete.

ommuting in Seattle just got easier: three new Link light rail stations opened to the public on Oct. 2 as part of the 4.3-mile Northgate Link Extension connecting Husky Stadium to Northgate.

While building U District Station and Roosevelt Station over



BY DAVE JOHNSON HOFFMAN CONSTRUCTION CO.

man Construction contended with construction sites among some of the city's busiest neighborhoods, coordination with other Sound Transit contractors, and a stagger-

the last four

Hoff-

years,

ing amount of concrete poured below grade.

U District Station was constructed with minimal impact to the busy University District and the adjacent UW Tower, and is designed to accommodate a transit-oriented development over the top of the station. Located directly across from Roosevelt High School, Roosevelt Station construction proceeded with minimal impact to its bustling neighborhood. The station is 90 feet deep, approximately 500 feet long, and 80 feet wide, with four levels underground and one above

SHIP IN A BOTTLE

During construction, our team referred to the U District Station as the equivalent of building a ship in a bottle through a storm drain — the building is mostly underground, so everything had to be lowered into the excavation area through massive struts that spanned the station box.

On both stations, we utilized BIM and 4D sequencing to coordinate and sequence numerous large elements into the station box and ensure they would fit through temporary structure openings, including eight large escalators and steel escalator enclosure tubes that had to be rigged and loaded into the structure after the structure lid was completed. With the stations 90 feet below grade, we implemented extensive waterproofing systems to prevent water from entering and extensive ventilation systems that include tunnels with large 400-horsepower exhaust fans.

THE STANDARD CANOPY SIGN

A distinctive feature of Roosevelt is the incorporation of a classic red and green neon sign from the Standard Radio store, which had been a cherished part of the Roosevelt neighborhood since the 1940s. To keep the spirit of the neighborhood alive, Sound Transit salvaged the original sign from the demolished buildings at the Roosevelt Station site and Hoffman worked with Western Neon to rebuild and refurbish the iconic sign. The restored sign now hangs at the south headhouse ticketing area at the Northeast 65th Street entry.

A UNIQUE CRANE

Hoffman's in-house structural division, Hoffman Structures, self-performed installation of about 40,000 cubic yards of concrete on Roosevelt Station. To tackle the vast amount of mass concrete, Hoffman Structures used the Kroll tower crane that the tunnel contractor, JCM, had utilized during the tunneling work.

The giant crane, nicknamed

The giant crane, nicknamed "Big Red," was a neighborhood landmark. With higher capacity to hoist heavy components than a typical tower crane, the team could prefabricate wall pilasters at full height and build larger gang forms and rebar curtains, thus increasing efficiency and safety by minimizing the work required at heights. Sound Transit later hosted crane dismantling watch parties to celebrate and mark the next phase of construction.

A WEB OF CONTRACTORS

With both stations on the critical path of the overall schedule for the Northgate Link Extension project, finishing the stations in time for this month's grand opening required detailed coordination with many other Sound Transit contractors. During three years of preconstruction, Hoffman worked through numerous logistical and phasing challenges to plan for construction to proceed in tandem with tunneling, rail, and systems happening in and around the station, as well as adjacent apartment building construction across from the Roosevelt Station site. Early initial planning and engagement with permitting officials helped all parties plan to allow permits to be signed off at completion of multiple systems with multiple interfaces.

Our U District team worked closely with the tunneling contractor to allow them to install the tunnel liner segments into the south third of the station box while Hoffman continued construction of the rest of the station box. The team also trans-

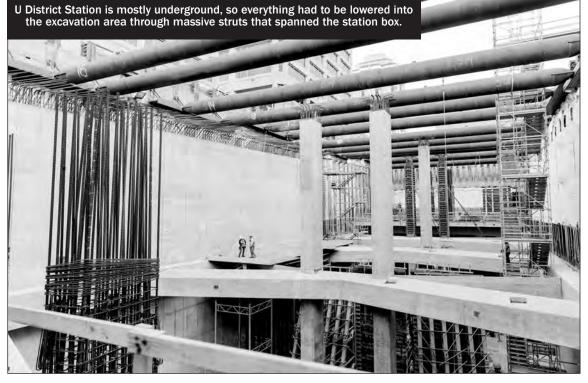


PHOTO BY GLENN LANDBERG/SOUND TRANSIT



ferred control of the south end of the station to the rail contractor for six months to install the floating rail isolation slabs after Hoffman had only worked in that area for three months.

As with any successful GC/CM project, collaboration with the design teams and Sound Transit construction management teams — McMillan Jacobs, Hewitt and KPFF on Roosevelt; McMillan Jacobs and LMN on

U District — was critical for ensuring details were constructable and the design would work with the complex phasing and sequencing.

Both projects utilized the mechanical contractor/construction manager and electrical contractor/construction manager process to bring on early trade partners — McKinstry and VECA for Roosevelt; UMC and VECA for U District. Their help during pre-

PHOTO BY GLENN LANDBERG/SOUND TRANSIT

construction to plan and execute the complicated mechanical and electrical systems was invaluable.

DIVERSE WORKFORCE

Sound Transit and Hoffman Construction share in our dedication to furthering diversity through fair competition and ongoing training and development for small and disadvan-

taged business enterprises. Hoffman exceeded diverse participation goals on both Sound Transit projects by holding outreach sessions to engage the diverse business community, helping to match and connect firms with first-tier subcontractors, and developing scopes in which diverse firms could be successful.

Hoffman received the 2017 Champion of Inclusion Award from Sound Transit for our leadership on U District Station in support of diversity and inclusion.

Hoffman helped bring disadvantaged workers into the workforce through collaboration with the many building trades unions that helped make these Sound Transit projects a success. The project labor agreements' preferred entry program allowed graduates of pre-apprenticeship programs the opportunity to work on the project. Hoffman partnered with ANEW, an organization dedicated to improving access and advancement of women and people of color in construction through its preferred entry pre-apprenticeships and training programs.

We are proud to deliver these new stations that will positively impact our communities for decades to come.

Dave Johnson is executive vice president at Hoffman Construction Co.



PHOTO BY HOFFMAN CONSTRUCTION

EQUITABLE TRANSIT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

side of Northeast 103rd Street. The spacious plaza by the station's south entrance has been designed to welcome riders and provide convenient transfers between the light rail and other modes of transportation. Bus loading zones, paratransit access, and pedestrian routes are located with a direct line of sight to the station entrance.

The north entrance connects directly to the new parking garage and nearby commercial center. Designed to optimize the site, the garage is largely underground, and vehicular access is fully separated from pedestrian and bicycle access to ensure passenger safety.

Designed to provide a sense of place, riders are greeted by a bountiful amount of public art including Mary Anne Peters' colorful stained-glass paintings within the station and Cris Bruch's graceful plaza sculpture by the south entrance and wall-mounted sculpture by the north entrance. Northgate station is a bustling, dynamic focal point for the community while enhancing the sense of arrival and sense of belonging.

Roosevelt and Northgate stations are both vibrant multimodal transit centers that connect neighborhoods and build communities, offering people enhanced flexibility in where they can live, work, learn, and play. As problem solvers, we ensure our designs are innovative, pragmatic, and reflect the character of the communities we serve. Our vision is to bring high-quality transit stations to every neighborhood and to continue to transform our region with a world-class transportation system that provides equitable transportation options for all people, because we believe transportation is a human right.

As a principal and the director of design for transportation architecture at Hewitt, Leah Ephrem has overseen and led design efforts for many transit projects in the Puget Sound region, including light rail and commuter rail expansion, BRT integration, and aviation projects.

LIVABLE CITY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

District light rail station in Seattle. Appealing, like Grand Street Commons farther south near Judkins Park Station, which will soon transform a formerly contaminated brownfield site into a mixed-use hub combining affordable and market-rate housing with an engaging public gathering place and retail

Each of these properties is one of a kind. They are proving that density doesn't have to come at the expense of personality and placemaking.

EQUITABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

Any plan for the future of the region should include people of all economic strata. Another powerful benefit of TOD is its capacity to expand access to affordable housing in the city, allowing low-income workers, who often don't have cars, to live closer to where they work.

Gardner House, whose uniquely carved open form is inspired by the glacial action that formed the Rainier Valley, offers 95 units of one-, two- and three-bedroom housing for low-income and homeless families. An L c, inspired by Vietnamese "tube houses" and located in Seattle's International District, is a mixed-use building that we

designed for the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI). It combines 69 units of affordable housing, retail space, as well as office space occupied by LIHI's offices. These muchneeded affordable housing developments will soon be joined by George Fleming Place and Hobson Place, which are both slated for completion later this year.

FUTURE-PROOFING OUR CITIES

Massive population growth over the next three decades in the Puget Sound region is inevitable. The question is how we - both as a community, and as part of the design and development industry — intend to accommodate it responsibly. For us, TOD is the obvious planning strategy. TOD can mean healthier, more equitable, and more interesting neighborhoods, along with lower carbon footprint and less urban sprawl. That's a triple win: for the region, its people and the planet.

Brian Runberg is the founding partner of Runberg Architecture Group. Constanza Marcheselli is a principal at Runberg Architecture Group. Both are passionate about designing transit-oriented developments that promote sustainable lifestyles.

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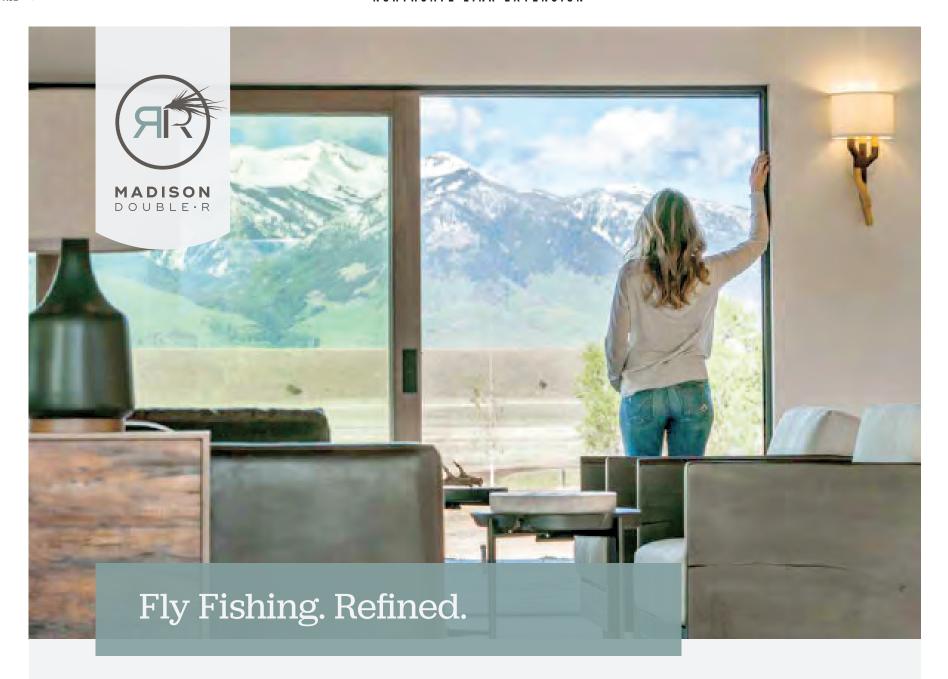
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This meeting features a moderated panel where we explore the topic from the perspectives of project owners, and present questions from our audience.

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