

Coming this November will be a Roads & Transit package seeking all-or-nothing voter approval of new taxes to support the transportation improvement needs of the three-county urban region

What You Need to Know About the Roads & Transit Programs

**Prepared for the
Eastside Transportation Association**

**Prepared by
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July 16, 2007

Program Facts Summary

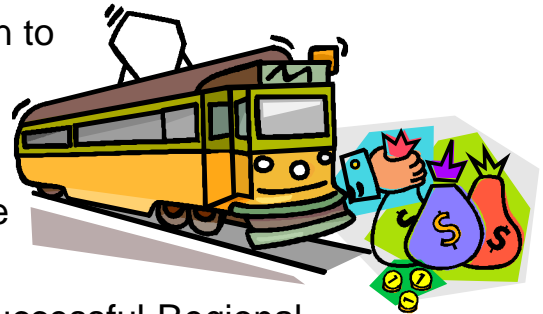
- The initial RTID capital needs program was cut by half to share a tax increase with a transit capital program. But zeal for expanding the light rail system doubled the transit “half” of the combined package
- The Roads & Transit package will cost \$38.1 billion thru 2027:
 - RTID -- \$14.5 billion; ST2 - \$23.6 billion.
- In 2028 there will be a combined bonded debt balance of \$12.3 billion. Total cost of the programs with bond interest will be:
 - RTID -- \$16.1 billion (34%); ST2 -- \$30.8 billion (66%); Total -- \$46.9 billion
- The RTID program will be completed and bonds paid off by 2037 with a total cumulative cost of \$16.1 billion, all paid by local tax collections that will sunset in 2037
- But in addition to debt service, ST2 will have large ongoing O&M costs and capital replacement reserve contributions after 2027
 - These costs will likely result in continuing the local tax collections in full thru 2057 when the bonds are paid off
 - By the time the ST2 bonds are paid off in 2057 the cumulative ST2 tax collections will total \$77 billion.
 - There is no sunset being promised for the ST2 tax commitment – only a partial reduction after the bonds are paid off IF a “Phase 3” is not pursued for further rail extensions
- Approval of ST2 will include approval of extending the ST1 (*Sound Move*) sales tax levy in perpetuity. Thru 2057 Sound Transit will have collected \$67 billion in local taxes for its Phase 1 programs
- **The 50-year tax commitment thru 2057 with approval of the Roads and Transit Package:**
 - **Sound Transit ST1 Program -- \$67.3 billion (42%)**
 - **Sound Transit ST2 Program -- \$77.0 billion (48%)**
 - **The reduced RTID Program -- \$16.1 billion (10%)**
 - **Total Regional Transportation taxes -- \$160.4 billion**
- See pages 5-9 for expanded detail on the financial plans for these three programs and what the programs will provide

Mythical Facts & Corrections

- Sound Transit claims that the per-household costs of the Roads & Transit package will be \$150 per year plus \$80 per auto
 - This is a lowball estimate that claims that only 40% of sales tax revenues are paid by household taxpayers and consumers
 - Understand that approval of ST2 will also perpetuate the ST1 sales taxes
 - Combined ST1 + ST2 + RTID taxes will range up to \$890 per household in 2008 and inflate at ST's estimated 5.2% per year thereafter (see page 10).
- Sound Transit claims that its ST2 program would greatly reduce traffic congestion (see pages 12-14)
 - Yet its estimates show that by 2030 ST2 would only attract 74,000 new transit trips per day out of the region's total of 16.4 million trips per day by 2030 – a 0.5% shift from auto use compared to No Action
 - The region-wide transit share of all trips by 2030 is estimated at 3.2% without ST2 increasing to only 3.7% with ST2. Currently the transit share is 2.7%.
- But, ST says, with ST2 transit will serve 40% of all peak period trips
 - **A huge exaggeration.** By 2030 transit will serve 40% of work trips to downtown Seattle where only 10% of the region's jobs are located;
 - It will serve 9% of all other Seattle work trips, and only 2% of the work trips for the balance of the region where 70% of the region's jobs are located
 - Work trips constitute only 22% of total weekday trips and less than half of all freeway trips during the PM peak period
 - The region-wide transit share of peak period trips by 2030 is estimated at 4.6% without ST2 increasing to 5.3% with ST2.
- Sound Transit touts rail as “reliable transit”
 - But does reliability for portions of less than 2% of the region's trips predicted by ST to be able to use light rail warrant its tremendous expense?
 - Does that mean that we have wasted \$billions on Transit/HOV lanes that we will allow to stagnate?
- “Road funding has received large gas tax increases over the past few years; now it is time for more transit spending”
 - The fuel tax increase from 23c/gal fixed in 1991 to 37.5c/gal by 2008 will simply compensate for inflation at 1.0 x the CPI (Consumer Price Index).
 - Transit tax revenues grow at double the rate of the CPI. In addition, new transit taxes have been approved in this region since 1995 equivalent to 24c/gal in tax revenue generation
 - As the result, we are currently spending 52% of every transportation tax dollar in this region on public transit (see page 11)

Building the R&T Package

- Survey pundits originally believed that the voters might approve the equivalent of a 0.5% sales tax increase to address the region's growing traffic congestion problems
- The RTID/Roads package was conceived to supplement funding of improvements for our major "highways of statewide significance"
- To accommodate the identified major highway replacement and expansion needs, the RTID capital funding needs were initially estimated at up to \$18 billion in completed construction dollars, to be implemented over a 20-year period from 2008 thru 2027
- But public transit proponents insisted that we plan for a "balanced" roads AND transit package
- The RTID project list and capital cost estimates were reduced from \$18 billion to \$9 billion to allow up to \$9 billion of a joint package to be spent on transit improvements
- The transit half of the spending package was given over to Sound Transit to plan and implement a Phase 2 of its Regional Transit system that was initiated by a major tax increase in 1996
- But as the emerging transit package began to focus more and more on expansions of Sound Transit's 18-mile Central Link "starter rail" line, the light rail extensions grew to 50 miles and the capital cost of the ST2 plan doubled to \$18 billion
- Any major expansion of Sound Transit's successful Regional Express Bus system was eliminated
- In its mission to build a rail transit system, Sound Transit has sheltered the public from its shattered promises for a 10-year Phase 1 rail program that would be on-time and on-budget
- **This package provides summary observations on the full costs of the Roads & Transit package, and focuses on providing a more complete public understanding of the now greatly unbalanced Roads & Transit package**



Status of ST1 (*Sound Move*)

- Sound Transit's Regional Transit Plan (RTP) Phase 1 was approved by voters in 1996 with voter understanding that it would "conservatively" cost \$3.9 billion in 1995\$ (actual inflated cost \$5.0 billion) and be easily completed by 2006
- Phase 1 included a 21-mile light rail line from S.200th in SeaTac to NE 45th street in the U-District for \$2.3 billion in year-of-expense (YOE) dollars, plus Commuter Rail from Everett to Tacoma for a capital cost of YOE \$647 million
- Sound Transit eventually admitted that its "conservative" capital cost estimates for Central Link and Sounder were underestimated by half. Central Link was reduced to an "initial segment" from downtown Seattle to Tukwila with a later extension to Sea-Tac Airport. The time of Phase 1 completion was extended 4 years out to 2010
- In an attempt to bring its Phase 1 Central Link promise closer to completion, in 2005 Sound Transit modified its financial policies and initiated a 2nd federal grant application to finance a \$1.6 billion North Link extension to the U of W Husky Stadium by 2016 – a potential interim north terminus acceptable to none other than Sound Transit
- Summarized below is the *Sound Move* (ST1) financial plan as originally promised versus what its costs have expanded to thru 2016, and what costs will increase to by 2027 with approval of ST2. Note that five stations have also been deferred or eliminated.

Sound Move (ST1) Financial Plan Summary

\$millions	Original Promise		Current Estimates in YOE\$		
	2006 Completion¹		Thru²	Thru³	Thru
Revenues	1995\$	YOE\$	2006	2016	2027
Local Taxes	\$1,980	\$2,446	2,618	6,887	\$14,801
Fed Grants	\$727	956	588	1,908	2,320
Bond Sales	1,052	1,383	764	2,215	\$2,215
Fares/Other	133	178	429	884	1,965
Total	\$3,892	\$4,963	4,399	11,894	\$21,302
Expenses					
Capital Projects	\$3,009	\$3,849	2,935	6,132	6,275
Commuter Rail	\$539	647	912	1,247	1,247
Regional Express	\$724	936	463	807	807
Light Rail	\$1,746	2,266	1,560	4,078	4,221
Agency Admin	\$148	181	251	503	710
O&M Costs ⁴	480	609	578	2,586	6,638
Debt Service	171	221	181	1,185	2,826
Reserves/Other	84	103	79	591	1,424
Total	\$3,892	\$4,963	\$4,023	10,998	17,873
Ending Cash	0	0	376	896	3,429



¹ YOE\$ means actual Revenues and Expenses through program completion -- promised by 2006.

² Actual Revenue and Expense thru 2006. Completion extended 4 years thru 2010.

³ Only 19 of 22 miles of Central Link completed. Remaining 3 miles/\$1.0 billion transferred to ST2.

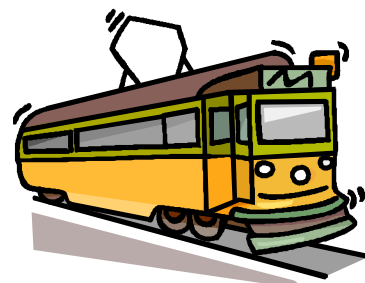
⁴ Sound Transit's Citizen Oversight Panel warns that O&M costs are significantly underestimated.

ST2 & Its Financial Plan

- As of January 2005 the Draft ST2 Project List included 80 projects desired by Sound Transit's participating county/city agencies. They included 33 projects to expand the Regional Express Bus program and 18 projects to enhance the Sounder commuter rail program
- In its exuberance to maximize its light rail transit system, the ST Board eliminated 27 of the 33 REx projects and 11 of the Sounder projects. For East King this in effect eliminated the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) program for the I-405/SR-167 corridor -- the adopted priority program for addressing the transit needs of East and SE King County to serve their travel patterns
- The ST2 program has now simply maximized a Seattle-centric overlay of the already best-served express bus transit corridors of the region
- The ST2 light rail program offers NO new transit service for travel patterns not already well-served by existing express bus services
- Summarized below is the ST2 financial plan thru its capital program completion in 2027 plus only its ongoing bond finance costs thru 2057. Not included are its ongoing operating costs in perpetuity. But the bottom line shows expected cumulative local tax collections thru 2057.
- Sound Transit has disclosed that the ST2 capital costs will total \$17.5 billion thru completion in 2027 plus admin and O&M costs that bring its total cost commitment thru 2027 up to \$23.6 billion. But post-2027 debt service commitments will require collection of an additional \$14.3 billion in local tax collections thru 2057.
- **Thru 2057 when the bonds are paid off, Sound Transit will have collected \$77 billion in ST2 taxes before the earliest year any ST2 tax reductions might possibly occur**

ST2 Financial Plan Summary

YOE \$millions ¹			
<u>2008 thru 2027²</u>		<u>Post-2027</u>	
<u>Revenues</u>		<u>Remaining Debt Service</u>	
Phase 1 Taxes	\$3,380	Bond Principal	\$7,080
New ST2 Taxes ³	\$11,610	Bond Interest	7,220
Bond Sales	7,320	Balance Due	\$14,300
Fed Grants/Other	1,250		
Total	\$23,560	Total Tax Collection Extends thru 2057	
<u>Expenses</u>		<u>Total Program Cost⁵</u>	
Capital Projects ⁴	\$17,500	Thru 2027 -	\$23,560
Admin/O&M	2,630	Interest Balance -	7,220
Finance Costs	2,010	TOTAL COST -	\$30,780
Reserves/Other	1,420	Tax Revenue thru 2037	\$23,700
Total	\$23,560	Tax Revenue thru 2057	\$77,000



95% of the ST2 program costs go to Light Rail transit expansion

¹ YOES means actual Revenues and Expenses through program completion.

² Sound Transit final ST2 Financial Plan summary adopted by the Board on 5/25/2007).

³ Being publicized as \$7.5 billion in 2006\$. ⁴ Being publicized as \$10.8 billion in 2006\$.

⁵ Excluding post-2027 O&M costs that will likely cause ST2 taxes to continue in perpetuity.

RTID and Its Financial Plan

- As noted above, the essential RTID program to address traffic congestion on our highway system was cut in half from established primary road enhancement financing needs
- The reduced program eliminated any funding of the Alaskan Viaduct replacement project, leaving its financing to existing state road funding. It limited needed supplementary funding for the I-405 corridor expansion to expansion from Renton to Bellevue only, leaving up to \$2 billion of the I-405 expansion program north to I-5 unfunded.
- It leaves \$2 billion of the \$4.4 billion SR-520 Bridge Replacement project to tolls and other state funding. It reduced the SR-167 extension project in Pierce County. It reduced the funding for full completion of the SR-509 extension project south of SeaTac and left much of the supporting expansion of I-5 south of S.210th unfunded. It reduced or eliminated RTID financing of other projects highly needed to address this region's traffic congestion
- In effect, the high priority on a rail transit program has severely reduced the ability of a sensible Roads & Transit project from addressing our primary #1 concern in this region of reducing highway congestion
- **Shown below is a summary of the reduced RTID program financial plan. Note that its reduced \$9.5 billion capital program plus admin and bond financing costs will be fully paid off by 2037 for a cumulative total tax cost of \$16.1 billion**

RTID Financial Summary

YOE \$millions¹

<u>2008 thru 2027²</u>		<u>Post-2027</u>	
<u>Revenues</u>		<u>Remaining Debt Service</u>	
RTID Taxes ³	\$8,040	Bond Principal ⁵	\$5,460
Bond Sales	6,314	Bond Interest	<u>1,780</u>
Other/Interest	<u>156</u>	Balance Due	\$7,240
Total	\$14,510	Tax collection ends in 2037.	
<u>Expenses</u>		<u>Total Program Cost⁵</u>	
Capital Projects ⁴	\$9,520	Thru 2027 -	\$14,510
Admin Costs	\$194	Interest Balance -	1,590
Finance Costs	4,500	TOTAL COST⁵ -	\$16,100
Reserves/Other	<u>296</u>		
Total	\$14,510	Total Tax Collection	\$16,100

¹ YOES means actual Revenues and Expenses through program completion.

² RTID final financial plan approved June 8, 2007.

³ Being publicized as \$4.7 billion in 2006\$.

⁴ Being publicized as \$6.7 billion in 2006\$.

⁵ Since bond proceeds are included in the Capital Project costs, the principal repayment is considered a negative revenue. Remaining bond interest less bond reserves add to 2027 expense for Total Cost.

Combined Costs of ST1, ST2 & RTID

- Combined actual program costs thru 2027 = \$56 billion
Delayed debt interest thru 2057 brings the total up to \$65.6 billion
excluding post-2027 ST1 and ST2 O&M expense
- RTID tax revenues will total \$16.1 billion thru 2037 when eliminated
- ST1 and ST2 tax revenues will total \$144 billion thru 2057 – likely the earliest year any sales tax reduction might occur
- Tax ratio of ST2+RTID thru 2057: RTID – 17%; Sound Transit – 83%

Sound Transit & RTID Programs -- Final Packages as of June 2007

Program Element: Cumulative Totals YOY \$millions	Cumulative thru 2027			Transportation Packages		
	ST1 ¹	ST2 ²	RTID ³	ST1+ST2	ST2+RTID	All Three
Sources of Funds						
Local Taxes ⁴	11,420	15,000	8,040	26,420	23,040	34,460
Federal Grants	2,320	900	0	3,220	900	3,220
Net Bond Proceeds	2,215	7,320	6,315	9,535	13,635	15,850
Fares & Other Sources	1,965	340	155	2,305	495	2,460
Total Sources	17,920	23,560	14,510	41,480	38,070	56,000
Uses of Funds						
Capital Programs:	6,270	17,510	9,520	23,780	27,030	33,300
Commuter Rail	1,250	330		1,580	330	1,580
Regional Express	800	500		1,300	500	1,300
Light Rail	4,220	16,680		20,900	16,680	20,900
Regional Roads			9,520		9,520	9,520
Operating Costs	6,685	1,070		7,755	1,070	7,755
Agency Costs	710	1,560	195	2,270	1,755	2,465
Debt Service	2,830	2,010	4,500	4,840	6,510	9,340
Contributions to reserve funds	1,425	1,410	295	2,835	1,705	3,130
Total Uses	17,920	23,560	14,510	41,480	38,070	56,000
Remaining Post-2027 Debt Service⁵	2,350	14,300	6,850	16,650	21,150	23,500
Bond Principal (Negative Revenue)	1,570	7,080	5,250	8,650	12,330	13,900
Bond Interest	780	7,220	1,600	8,000	8,820	9,600
Total Program Cost⁶	18,700	30,800	16,100	49,500	46,900	65,600
Local Tax Revenues thru 2037⁷	24,700	23,700	16,100	48,400	39,800	64,500
Local Tax Revenues thru 2057⁷	67,300	77,000	16,100	144,300	93,100	160,400

¹ Source: Sound Transit Draft 2007 Financial Plan (November 2006). **Note: Some slight rounding is included.**

² Source: Sound Transit final ST2 Financial Plan summary as of 5/17/07 (adopted by Board on 5/24/07).

³ Source: RTID Financial Plan as of June 8, 2007.

⁴ ST1: 0.4% Sales Tax in perpetuity plus 0.3% MVET thru 2028. ST2: +0.5% Sales Tax at least thru 2057.
The ST2 revenue assumes that there will be \$3.4 billion in excess ST1 revenues available to transfer to ST2.
RTID: +0.1% Sales Tax plus +0.8% MVET until bonds are paid off (expected in 2037).

⁵ Bond principal repayment is treated as negative income to avoid double-counting in Total Program Cost.

⁶ Includes Total Uses thru 2027 plus bond interest commitments thereafter. **Not included** is ST1 and ST2 O&M expense that will add to Total Program Cost and continue in perpetuity after 2027.

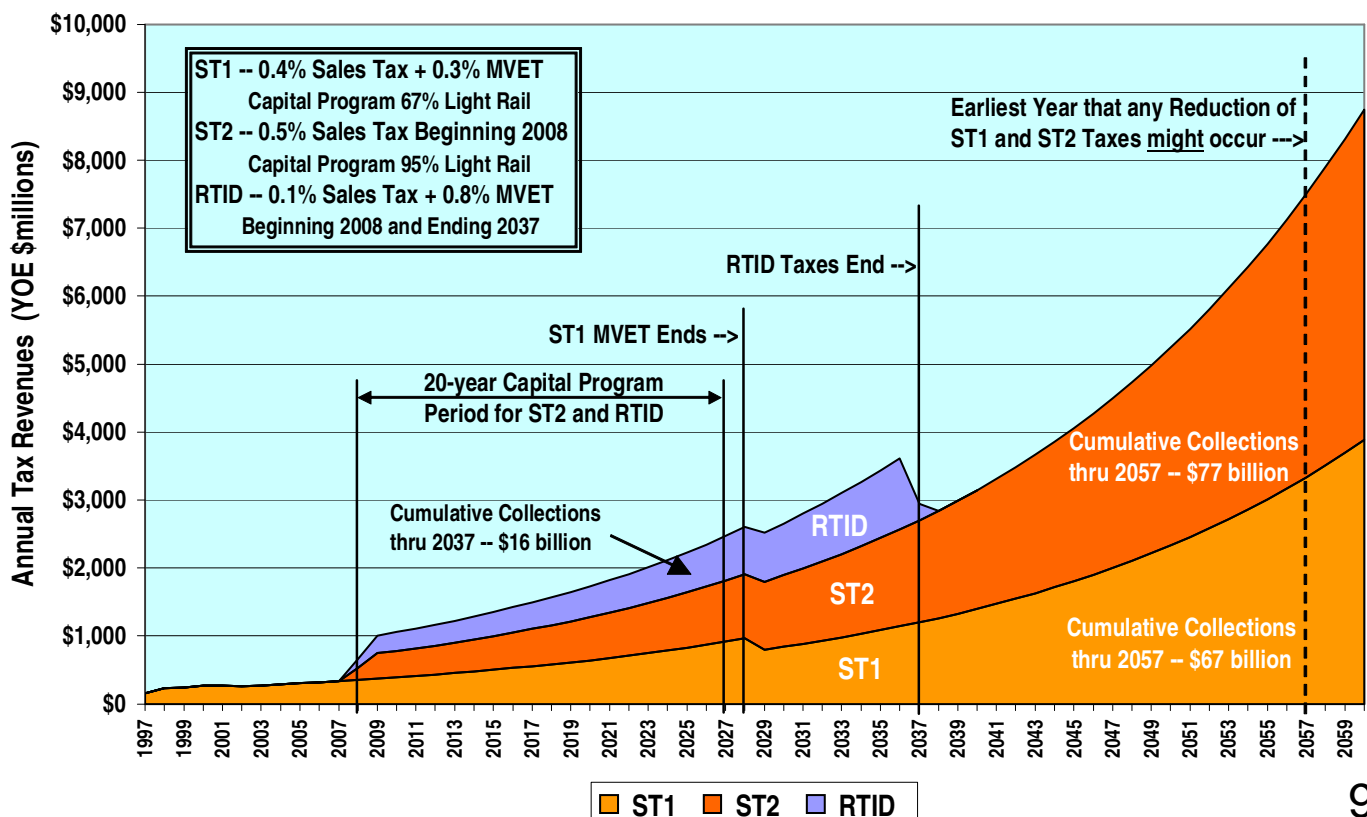
⁷ The post-2027 RTID debt service payments will be accelerated and the bonds paid off by 2037. ST1 sales taxes are expected to continue in perpetuity. ST2 tax collection will continue in full at least thru 2057 when all ST2 bonds are paid off.

Prepared by: James W. MacIsaac, P.E. June 30, 2007
Endorsed by the Eastside Transportation Association (ETA)

Comparison of Tax Commitments

- When approved in 1996, ST1 (Sound Move) taxes were to be reduced when the Phase 1 program was completed in 2006
- In 2000 the Legislature eliminated the MVET tax on vehicles. But through legal means ST managed to retain its MVET thru 2028
- Approval of ST2 will likely extend the ST1 sales tax in full at least thru 2057. Thru 2057 Sound Transit will have collected \$67 billion in ST1 taxes
- Approval of ST2 will increase the ST sales tax from 0.4% to 0.9%. Since it will likely be used to back all 30-year bond sales thru 2027, it likely cannot be reduced until at least after 2057
- In 2057 Sound Transit will collect \$7.5 billion in local annual taxes. Thru 2057 Sound Transit will have collected \$144 billion in local taxes
- The RTID will pay off its bonded debt by 2037 and end its tax collection. Thru its entire program, it will have collected \$16 billion in local taxes
- **When added to ST1 taxes, approval of the Roads & Transit package will create a combined commitment of \$160 billion local tax dollars thru 2057 with 10% dedicated to Roads.**

ST1, ST2 and RTID Annual Tax Revenues



Tax Costs per Household

- **Sound Transit has published annual cost per household of the Roads & Transit package as \$150 in sales taxes plus \$80 per \$10,000 of auto values. This is the “lowball” estimate of the real costs to household taxpayers**
- In preparing these estimates Sound Transit eliminated the 40% of sales tax revenues obtained from businesses. In reality, up to 90% of the business taxes are passed thru to the household/consumer in the costs of goods and services
- Sound Transit further reduced its estimates by an additional 20% by eliminating the very high-income households from its estimates, by assuming that all householders claim sales tax deductions on their federal income taxes, and other reductions
- Sound Transit has totally omitted the fact that approval of ST2 would also extend its ST1 (*Sound Move*) taxes thru the duration of the ST2 program
- The table below presents the “highball” estimate of annual taxes per household of the Sound Transit and RTID taxes that will be committed by approval of the Roads & Transit package, assuming a full year of tax collections would occur in 2008
- **In 2008\$ the annual cost of the ST2/RTID package would be up to \$635 per household plus \$253 in ST1 taxes for a total of up to \$888 per household**
- **Thru 2057 when the ST2 bonds are paid off, the average household will have paid \$100,000 in Sound Transit taxes and \$10,500 in RTID taxes**

2008 Taxes Per Household*

Cumulative Taxes thru:

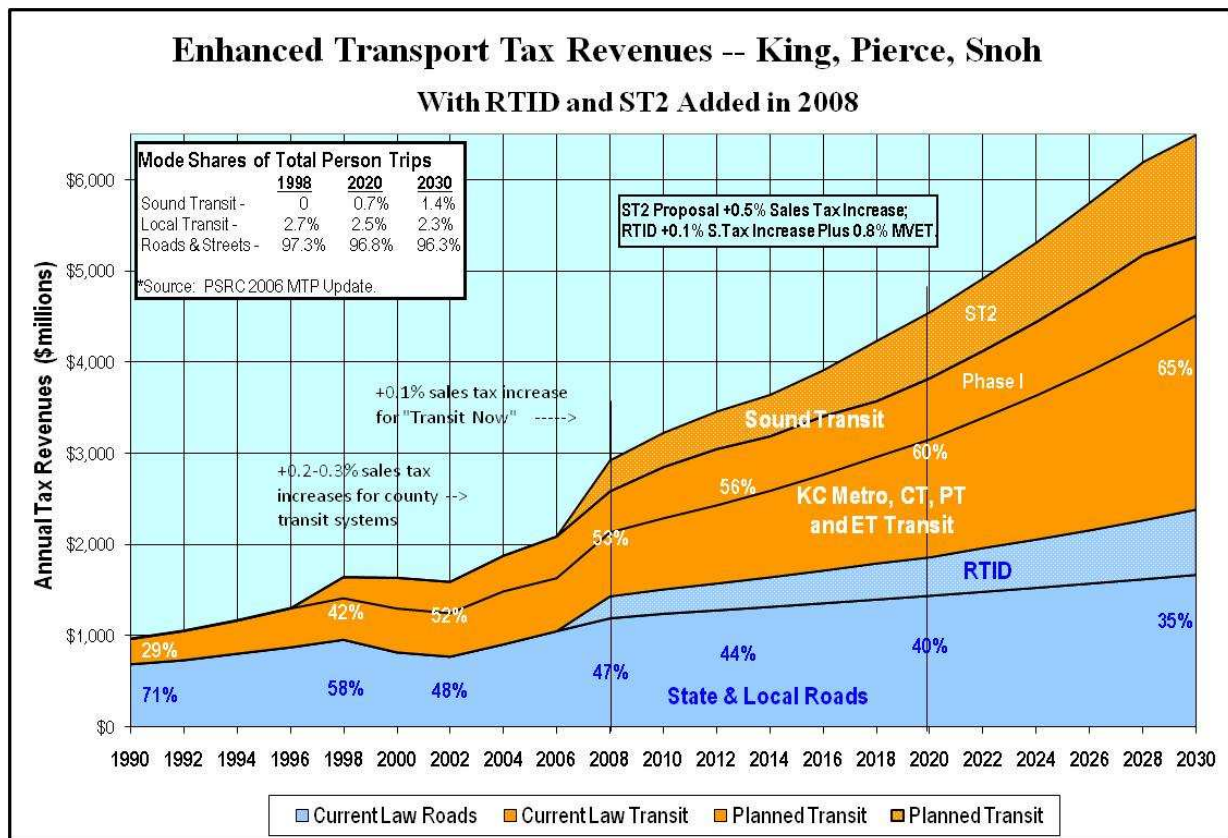
RTID Taxes		<u>In 2008**</u>	<u>2027</u>	<u>2057</u>
RTID Tax Area Population		2,942,600	3,321,700	3,596,800
Average Household Size		2.46		
Tax Area Households		1,196,200	1,350,300	1,533,600
2008 Tax Revenue		\$301,200,000	\$7,900,000,000	\$16,100,000,000
Cost per Household		\$253	\$5,850	\$10,500
Sound Transit Taxes				
Tax Area Population		2,763,600	3,067,600	3,474,300
Average Household Size		2.46		
Tax Area Households		1,123,400	1,269,400	1,441,700
<u>Current Phase I Taxes</u>				
<i>Sound Move</i> Tax Revenue		\$358,053,000	\$11,843,000,000	\$67,350,000,000
Cost per Household		\$320	\$9,330	\$46,700
<u>Proposed Phase II Taxes</u>				
ST2 Tax Revenue		\$353,253,000	\$11,700,000,000	\$77,000,000,000
Cost per Household		\$315	\$9,220	\$53,400
Combined Total RTID and ST Taxes				
Cost per Household		\$888	\$24,400	\$110,600

*Assumes all sales taxes pass thru to household residents of the tax area -- an upside estimate
This gives the head of household an upside estimate of ST and RTID tax costs per year.

** Reflects cost if taxes applied for the full year.

Use of Transportation Taxes

- Many transit supporters believe the lion's share of our transportation revenues go to streets and roads, protected by the 18th Amendment
- In 1991 71% of transportation tax revenues in this region went to roads and 29% went to transit – perhaps a reasonable split though transit served less than 5% of all motorized person trips. Public transit is a widely-accepted social subsidy
- But fixed fuel taxes and weight fees dwindle against inflation while transit taxes increase at double the CPI inflation rate. In addition we have approved several new transit taxes since 1995
 - In 1996 for Sound Transit a +0.4% sales tax increase and +0.3% MVET
 - In 2001-3 +0.2% to +0.3% sales tax increases for county transit
 - In 2006 a +0.1% sales tax increase for “Transit Now” in King County
- As a result, currently about 52% of all transportation tax revenues go to public transit. Unless fuel taxes and weight fees are indexed, current law transportation tax revenues by 2030 will be 63% to public transit
- The unbalanced Roads & Transit package would further skew transportation tax revenues to 65% for public transit by 2030



Truth About Ridership

- Sound Transit has published the following “boardings” estimates:
 - Total Weekday Without ST2 – 189,000 With ST2 – 359,000
 - The increase is implied to be new transit “trips”; these are transit “boardings”
- The truth about transit ridership is shown in the table below
 - Based upon PSRC regional travel estimates and ST transit “trip” estimates
 - Shown in terms of full transit “trips” from origin to destination
 - Bus-bus and bus-rail transfers cause two to three transit “boardings” per “trip”
 - Rail with limited stations requires feeder bus service, increasing transfers
- **ST2 would attract 74,000 new transit trips by 2030**
 - **If all transfer from private vehicles, vehicle trips would be reduced by 57,000**
 - **This represents a 0.5% reduction in vehicle travel by 2030 vs Without ST2**
 - **Peak period freeway traffic would be reduced by about 1%**
- A large share of rail ridership is merely raided from existing bus
 - Note the “Change with ST2” by transit mode with reduced bus ridership
 - The light Rail system merely overlays the best-served existing bus corridors
- **ST2 Will Have Minimal Effect on Reducing Traffic Congestion**

ST2 Transportation Impacts

Average Weekday Trips

Existing 2006		2030 w/o ST2	2030 with ST2	Change with ST2		
Total Weekday Trips per PSRC: ¹						
Total Person Trips	12,000,000	16,400,000	16,400,000	0		
Vehicle Trips	8,775,200	11,534,800	11,481,200	(53,600)		
Vehicle Persons	11,671,000	15,918,000	15,844,000	(74,000)		
Vehicle Mode Share	97.3%	97.1%	96.6%			
Total Weekday Transit Trips per Sound Transit ²						
Transit Trips	329,000	482,000	556,000	74,000		
Transit Mode Share	2.7%	2.9%	3.4%			
Transit Boardings	424,000	661,000	818,000	157,000	Transit Boardings with ST2	Transfer Rate
Transfer Rate	1.29	1.37	1.47			
Weekday Transit Trips by Mode:						
Link Light Rail	2,000	71,600	175,000	103,400	310,400	1.77
Sounder CR	4,300	10,700	9,600	(1,100)	15,400	1.60
ST Express	23,700	36,400	22,000	(14,400)	33,000	1.50
Local Transit	299,000	363,300	349,400	(13,900)	459,200	1.31
Total Transit	329,000	482,000	556,000	74,000	818,000	1.47

¹ PSRC 2006 MTP update, regional land use/transportation model findings.

² Sound Transit, ST2 *Making Transit Connections*, Appendix C, May 24, 2007.

ST2 Effect on Regional Travel

- Sound Transit makes claims that ST2 will have a major effect on Regional Traffic travel reduction
- Let us first focus on total Weekday travel
- The table below summarizes total weekday Regional travel by Roads & Transit for three major sectors of the region in a 1998 Base Year before Sound Transit and by 2030 with Sound Transit Phases 1 and 2
- 1998 Base Year before Sound Transit
 - Downtown Seattle attracts 5.4% of all Regional Person Trips and 54% of all Transit Trips, with a transit mode share of 27% -- a good transit share
 - The “Balance of Seattle” attracts 20% of all Regional Person Trips and 34% of all Transit Trips, with a transit share of 4.6% -- not good for the transit-oriented city
 - The “Balance of the Region attracts 75% of all Regional Person Trips but only 12% of all transit Trips, with a poor transit share of only 0.4%
- 2030 with Completion of ST1 and ST2
 - Downtown Seattle attracts 4.6% of all Regional Person Trips and 54% of all Transit Trips, with a transit mode share of 43% -- a great transit share increase
 - The “Balance of Seattle” attracts 18% of all Regional Person Trips and 31% of all Transit Trips, with a transit share of 6.3% -- a minor increase in transit use
 - The “Balance of the Region attracts 77% of all Regional Person Trips but only 15% of all transit Trips, with a poor transit share of only 0.7%
- **The Regional Transit Plan Does Little for the Suburban Region**

Total Regional Person Trip Attractions¹

	Total Person Trips		Transit Person Trips		Transit Share
	Trips	% Region	Trips	% Region	
1998 Base Year					
Seattle CBD	553,383	5.4%	148,516	53.5%	26.8%
Balance of Seattle	2,079,378	20.2%	95,056	34.2%	4.6%
Balance of Region	7,652,597	74.4%	34,113	12.3%	0.4%
Total Region	10,285,358	100.0%	277,685	100.0%	2.7%
2030 MTP Completion Year²					
Seattle CBD	740,674	4.6%	319,289	53.9%	43.1%
Balance of Seattle	2,913,863	18.0%	182,958	30.9%	6.3%
Balance of Region	12,546,938	77.4%	90,606	15.3%	0.7%
Total Region	16,201,474	100.0%	592,853	100.0%	3.7%

¹ Source: PSRC 2001 MTP Update. "Attractions" represent the destination end of trips.

² Reflects full completion of the ST1 and ST2 light rail programs by 2030.

ST2 Effect on Work Trips

- Sound Transit claims that the major benefit of its Rail Transit programs is in reducing peak period vehicle travel dominated by Home-Work trips
- It claims that with ST2 transit will serve up to 40% of all trips on the region's major travel corridors – a gross exaggeration
 - Transit serves only 40% of work trips to the 10% of jobs in downtown Seattle
- But Work trips constitute less than half of all freeway trips during the PM peak period of travel
- YES, ST1 and ST2 will increase the work trip mode share for downtown Seattle from 40% of its 10% of the region's jobs today to 56% of its 9% of the region's jobs in 2030
- But for the other 20% of Seattle jobs, the transit mode share with ST1 and ST2 would only increase from 10.3% in 1998 to 11.2% by 2030
- **And for the 70% of jobs in the “Balance of the Region”, ST1 and ST2 would only increase the transit share of work trips from 1.3% in 1998 to 1.9% by 2030**
- Sound Transit's claim that by 2030 with ST1 and ST2 transit would serve up to 40% of all trips in the major corridors of the region is an abusive misuse and unsubstantiated gross exaggeration of regional travel forecast data.
- **ST's ST2 program would have minimal effect on traffic congestion during peak periods as well as all day**

Home-Work Person Trip Attractions

	Total Person Trips		Transit Person Trips		Transit Share	Employment	
	Trips	% Region	Trips	% Region		Jobs	% Region
1998 Base Year							
Seattle CBD	203,383	9.1%	83,880	53.1%	41.2%	183,200	10.5%
Balance of Seattle	529,798	23.7%	54,797	34.7%	10.3%	353,300	20.2%
Balance of Region	1,504,568	67.2%	19,244	12.2%	1.3%	1,212,200	69.3%
Total Region	2,237,749	100.0%	157,921	100.0%	7.1%	1,748,700	100.0%
2030 MTP Completion Year²							
Seattle CBD	276,580	8.6%	155,218	55.0%	56.1%	224,600	9.9%
Balance of Seattle	721,671	21.2%	80,872	28.7%	11.2%	454,400	19.9%
Balance of Region	2,478,026	70.2%	45,926	16.3%	1.9%	1,599,600	70.2%
Total Region	3,476,277	100.0%	282,016	100.0%	8.1%	2,278,600	100.0%

¹ Source: PSRC 2001 MTP Update. "Attractions" represent the destination end of trips.

² Reflects full completion of the ST1 and ST2 light rail programs by 2030.

Post-Script on Atlanta

We still continue to hear from the rail transit proponents that the transfer of federal funds for a Seattle starter rail system to Atlanta in 1970 was a great mistake. But few if any have researched this issue.

The rejections of a rail system for our region in 1968 and 1970 caused a major change in the way we provide bus transit in this region. King County set out on a program called "Metro Transition". It adopted a plan for regional bus transit with subregional transit centers and park-ride lots with express bus services using Transit/HOV lanes on the regional freeway system. The program included the embracing of a car/vanpool program to share the freeway HOV lanes. When the Pierce and Snohomish County transit systems were created, they immediately adopted this type of local and regional transit center and express bus service, and joined with KC Metro in inter-county service agreements.

The Central Puget Sound bus transit system became a regional model for promotion by the FTA. The 2000 Census found our Seattle-Tacoma-Everett bus transit system the 8th best in the nation in capturing a 7.6% share of all home-work trips in the region. West of the Mississippi only the San Francisco Bay Area transit systems carried a higher share of work trips. The Seattle urban area share of work trips was higher than those for every urban area that had developed a light rail system.

For the combined bus and MARTA transit systems in the Atlanta urban region, the 2000 Census found that the transit share of serving work trips was less than half of that for our region -- 3.5%. Here is how a colleague of mine has better summarized the grim transit situation in Atlanta.

"Let's take a look at what happened to Atlanta since they got the UMTA grant Seattle sought. What we see is that the Atlanta region did indeed build a rail system, but it hasn't solved their problems. They have terrible traffic congestion, awful suburban sprawl (far worse than the Seattle area), serious air quality problems, and transit ridership is lower today than it was ten years ago."

Why should the Puget Sound region look upon that situation with envy? Atlanta may have gotten a rail system, but they ended up with exactly the kind of transportation and land use mess Puget Sound residents desperately want to avoid. And you can forget that nonsense about having the bonds paid off by now. In fact, the MARTA system in Atlanta ended up costing more to operate and maintain than projected. As a result, that agency is still about a billion dollars in debt at the very time when they need a massive infusion of revenue to renovate their aging rail lines. To help bridge the funding gap they have raised fares and cut bus service. No wonder ridership is falling."

In summary, it can be seen that rather than making a blunder back in the late 60's, the voters of the Puget Sound region chose prudently. They had reason to believe there was a better alternative, and history has shown them to be correct. The combination of a freeway HOV network (a billion+ dollar investment now finally approaching completion), well funded local bus systems, and strong TDM programs have succeeded in the Puget Sound region to a far greater degree than the rail lines Atlanta built."

Atlanta learned the hard way. An objective look at their experience shows they have set an example we should do everything possible to avoid, not emulate. And just as voters in the late 1960's had reason to believe there was a better alternative than the one on the ballot, the same question should be asked about the ST2/RTID package today."

“What is Your Plan?”

- This is the question continuously thrown at rail transit opponents
- After rejection in 1995, *Sound Move* greatly reduced the rail program and added the Regional Express Bus program that was implemented over just a few years with an ultimate cost of under \$1 billion that includes many BRT-type enhancements
- “Our transit plan” is to continue expanding the bus transit system that has placed this region 8th in the nation in share of work trips served by public transit and gained FTA recognition as a model bus system
- Preserve and enhance the Transit/HOV fast lane system

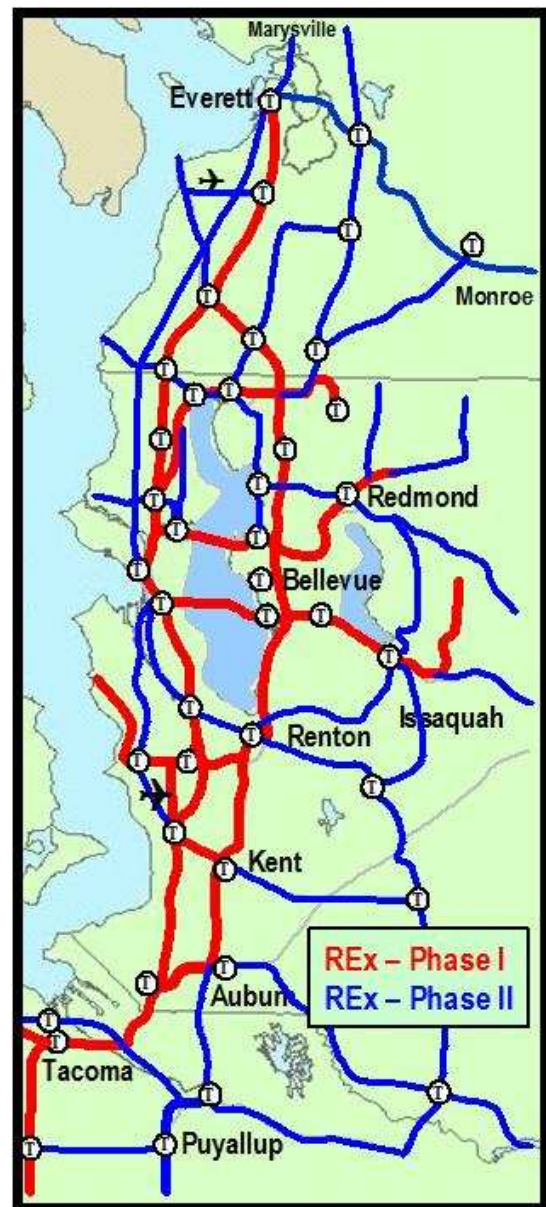


← This?

Or

This →

For one-tenth the cost, five years for basic route implementation, and ongoing enhances over time?



Alternate RTID Plan

- The RTID package for supplemental regional road funding is badly needed, but it has been severely reduced by planned transit spending
- Examples of its capital project funding shortfalls
 - It provides no funding support for the Alaskan Viaduct replacement
 - It provides only 25% of the funding support needed for the SR-520 bridge replacement project, no funding for additional GP lanes to relieve the serious bridge bottleneck, and no funding for other SR-520 corridor improvement needs east of I-405
 - It helps fund only one-third of the 30-mile I-405 corridor roadway expansion plans and none of its arterial access improvement needs
 - It leaves the SR-509 extension project in SeaTac only partially funded without HOV lanes and without the I-5 supplemental lanes to accommodate the SR-509 traffic additions
 - It leaves the SR-167 extension from Puyallup to SR-509 in the Port of Tacoma incomplete
 - It does nothing for the seriously overloaded I-5 corridor
 - It has deleted a number of other project improvement needs for “highways of statewide significance” that were originally identified for inclusion in the RTID
- The RTID and ST2 plans need to be reevaluated for better balance in addressing the region’s transportation needs
 - Roadway congestion reduction should be given the highest priority
 - Least-cost planning as required by state law needs to be taken into serious account on behalf of the region’s taxpayers
 - The I-405 Corridor Program has illustrated that freeway capacity enhancements are physically doable
 - I-5 severe traffic demand overloads from Tacoma to Everett must be addressed
 - Serious consideration should be given to a regional road improvement plan developed and proposed by an Eastside development company
- Serious consideration must be given to ridesharing
 - Two-thirds of the seat capacity of all private vehicles served by our regional highway system remain unused
 - Our transportation plan must refocus on ways and means to increase private vehicle ridesharing (only a 1% increase in average vehicle occupancy could match the vehicle reduction estimated for the ST2 project)
 - We need to refocus on major expansion of the publicly aided vanpool programs
- **We need to focus a transportation plan on more efficient use of our major highway/freeway systems rather than on rail transit**

A Sad Choice for this Region

- It will be a sad day for this region to have to reject a major transportation improvement package
- But it is so unbalanced toward funding a Seattle-centric rail transit overlay of the already best served Seattle transit access routes that it does little to address the top priority need of this region to address a significant reduction of highway congestion
- The transit element does little to address the unserved or poorly served transit needs of the suburban region where 85% of the travel needs require serious address
- The transit element provides no new transit alternative for those not already served by transit except for those few that would have a choice of riding rail rather than local or express bus
- The RTID has been so seriously cut back in the press to expand rail transit that it only marginally addresses the highway congestion problem
- If separately offered to the taxpayers, the RTID offers nearly all of the traffic congestion reduction potential of the joint package. But that is not a choice being offered
- Voters must reject the combined package and insist that government come back with a more cost efficient package much more oriented toward the number 1 public concern – addressing and hopefully reducing highway congestion that all regional planning models predict will double with approval of the current joint package
 - This paper has not included the dismal congestion and congestion cost estimates that are predicted to come by 2030 with this package
- **This is a sad recommendation coming for this regional transportation analyst over the past 45 years**

James W. MacIsaac is a professional transportation engineer that has spent 45 years in the planning of this region's transportation systems beginning with the first 4-county computerized regional land use and transportation planning study in the 1960's. He was a "charter senior engineer" for the Transportation Division of the PSRC when it was created in 1967. He since served as senior transportation planning engineer for international transportation consulting firms before creating and managing his own local transportation planning firm for 20 years. Since 1995 he has devoted his professional time to monitoring, analyzing and reporting on this region's major transportation projects and programs.