

May 24, 2007

Puget Sound Regional Council Executive Board
Central Puget Sound Region, Washington State

Dear Members:

In re: A comment on May 24th Executive Board agenda Item 8b, ST2 conformity with the MTP:

Coalition for Effective Transportation Alternatives (CETA) commends and thanks PSRC for requiring Sound Transit to prepare and submit a benefit-cost analysis (BCA) in conjunction with the certification of the conformity of the ST2 Plan with the Destination 2030 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

CETA notes that Sound Transit is quoting the top-line results of that analysis in the ST2 Plan document that is scheduled for approval by the Sound Transit Board this afternoon, May 24th. **PSRC can proudly take full credit for motivating Sound Transit to make these claims in the ST2 Plan:**

- Page C-9: "The estimated combined annual travel time savings for drivers and transit riders is approximately 62 million hours."
- Page D-6: "Taking into account the full costs of the ST2 Plan, Sound Transit estimates that the readily quantifiable benefits will be about 2.7 times the costs."
- Page D-7: "A benefit-cost analysis prepared for the light rail element of the Plan shows an expected rate of return of about 9% with cumulative benefits likely to exceed costs by over \$16 billion."

However, these claims by the project advocate need to be independently verified, which will not be possible until Sound Transit's June 5th or later release of the detailed inputs and outputs to the BCA.

In that regard, CETA has a continuing concern – expressed at the last Transportation Policy Board meeting – that the **PSRC staff and the PSRC Transportation Board are both too hasty in recommending that the Executive Board certify the ST2 Plan before actually seeing and evaluating Sound Transit's complete, detailed staff work** leading up to the benefit-cost results that have been presented to PSRC, the Sound Transit Board, and the general public. **What's the rush?** Sound Transit's Sheila Dezarn has said that this backup work will be presented to PSRC and the public sometime soon after June 5th, just two weeks in the future.

A potential anomaly that CETA requests PSRC to explore post June 5th is Sound Transit's benefits claim of **40 million hours per year** in projected travel time savings in 2030 for car and truck drivers as a result of ST2. This result (110,000 hours per day?) creates a startling juxtaposition with PSRC's previously modeled **236,000 daily hours of highway delay** (congestion) for 2030 shown in the performance results for the region (not including Kitsap County) under the fully implemented MTP (including ST2), as shown in Table 8-19 of the 2007 amended version of Destination 2030. What's going on here?

Respectfully yours,



John Niles
CETA Technical Co-Chairman