

Media Advisory – July 24, 2008

Contact: Christopher Schwarzen

Office: 425-388-3883

Email: Christopher.Schwarzen@snoco.org

Snohomish County delegates approve ST2 package

Snohomish County's three Sound Transit delegates voted Thursday to send a transportation package to voters as part of the November ballot.

The Sound Transit 2 Plan, approved unanimously for the ballot by the full board, will offer Snohomish County residents a chance to vote on a measure offering \$13.3 billion in year-of-expenditure capital improvements including inflation estimates. The package is the culmination of months of negotiations toward expanding a mass-transit system serving Snohomish, King and Pierce counties.

Led by County Executive Aaron Reardon, who serves as vice chairman of the Sound Transit board, the three members – including Edmonds City Councilwoman Deanna Dawson and Everett City Councilman Paul Roberts – told voters they support the package, which will be paid for through a 0.5 percent sales tax increase, costing the average resident \$69 a year.

“With light rail to Lynnwood and substantially increased bus service, we’re offering Snohomish County residents long-term and short-term transit improvements,” Reardon said. “This is a strategic investment in our major corridors for the 21st century and beyond. This will help residents stay in front of the economic troubles they face in light of rising gas prices.”

Said Dawson, “This plan balances fiscal responsibility and a forward-looking transportation policy. We have reached the point where inaction is more risky than taking action. If approved by the voters, the benefits for Snohomish County could include less congestion, a cleaner environment, a more vibrant economy and an even better quality of life.”

“It is critical that we move forward and give voters the opportunity to make a decision on a transportation package, particularly in light of escalating fuel prices and rising demand for transportation alternatives,” Roberts said.

Improvements specific to Snohomish County are:

- Light rail to the Lynnwood Transit Center by 2023, including the option for parking expansions to accommodate transit ridership growth;
- A 30-percent increase in bus service to serve short- and long-term needs;
- As light rail opens in Lynnwood, bus service will be redeployed to other high-demand corridors;

- Additional parking for the Mukilteo Station, and funding for a permanent commuter rail station in Edmonds, including parking;
- Funding for park-and-ride expansions, pedestrian and bicycle improvements or other transit investments;
- Funding to further the planning of light rail to Everett.

###