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WASHINGTON STATE VOTERS PAMPHLET

STATE GENERAL ELECTION, NOVEMBER 5, 1996



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E OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
HOMISH COUNTY AUDITOR

Regional Transit Authority Proposition No. 1



BALLOT TITLE

PROPOSITION NO. 1 REGIONAL TRANSIT SYSTEM

To implement a regional rail and express bus system linking Tacoma, Seattle, Bellevue, Everett, other cities, and Sea-Tac airport, shall the Regional Transit Authority impose a sales and use tax of up to four-tenths of one percent and a motor vehicle excise tax of three-tenths of one percent to provide the local share of funding towards the \$3.9 billion estimated cost of the system, as provided in Resolution 75 and the "Ten-Year Regional Transit Plan"?

Explanatory Statement

RTA's Proposition 1 would implement the ten-year regional transit system plan for new rail and bus rapid transit in urban King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties.

Commuter rail would provide two-way rush hour service between Everett, Mukilteo, Edmonds, Seattle, Tukwila, Kent, Auburn, Sumner, Puyallup, Tacoma Dome, South Tacoma, and Lakewood.

Electric light rail would provide all-day, frequent, two-way service to employment, retail and residential centers, including between SeaTac, Sea-Tac Airport, Tukwila, Southeast Seattle, downtown Seattle, First Hill, Capitol Hill, University District (and, if additional funding is secured, Roosevelt District and Northgate); and between downtown Tacoma and Tacoma Dome.

Regional express bus lines would provide all-day, frequent, two-way service to centers including Bellevue, Kirkland, Redmond, Issaquah, Mercer Island, Woodinville, Bothell, Lynnwood, Mountlake Terrace, Everett, Shoreline, West Seattle, Renton, Burien, Tukwila, Sea-Tac, Federal Way, Kent, Auburn, and Tacoma. Many routes would use a new HOV Expressway, combining over 100 miles of continuous, state-funded HOV lanes and RTA-funded HOV ramps, so transit may travel in separated rights-of-way on congested freeways.

Regional trains and express buses would connect with local buses at new community connections points where customers would use a single ticket/pass to use regional and local transit.

The transit system would be built and operated using local taxes, federal grants, municipal bonds, and fares. A sales tax increase of four-tenths of one percent and a motor vehicle excise tax increase of three-tenths of one percent would provide the local funding, costing the average-income household about \$8/month (1995 dollars). No property tax would be used.

Statement for

Traffic gridlock frustrates everyone. Commuting to and from work is just not getting easier. Experience shows that traffic problems do not fix themselves.

Debate and delay are not solutions. Our economic future and quality of life are at stake.

Let's give people the choice of a reasonable alternative to worsening traffic conditions and reduce the air and water pollution from cars. This regional express plan, combining buses, light rail and commuter rail, is a balanced, realistic first step.

Everyone will benefit since the regional express plan will expand the capacity of our existing freeways and major regional arterials. By the year 2010, up to 40% of all peak hour trips will be made by transit or carpooling.

The new system will be convenient to use with frequent service and a single ticket for regional and local trips. New community gateways will allow easy transfers between cars, bikes, buses, light rail and commuter rail.

For the average family, the \$8 per month in increased taxes is a responsible investment in our community, ourselves and future generations.

It's time to act. The RTA regional express plan is the place to start. Please Vote Yes!

Rebuttal of statement against

Common sense says our communities will be better off if we take this first step. The opposition suggests none.

The new regional express plan is smaller than last year's proposal and will be finished sooner. That's why the taxes are the same.

Initially, tens of thousands of new riders will prove rail's efficiency, and more will follow.

After 10 years, any addition to the system will have to be voter approved, assuring accountability and satisfaction.

STATEMENT PREPARED BY: JAMES R. ELLIS,
DARLENE MADENWALD, REID SHOCKEY

Statement against

1. **Same taxes previously voted down.** The new plan is not "cheaper." We are voting on the same taxes we voted down last year: a 0.4% sales tax and 0.3% license tab fee. The typical household would still pay \$125 each year in higher taxes. The proposed taxes are permanent (no expiration date). We would pay the highest transit taxes in the nation.

2. **Still costs too much.** The new \$3.9 billion dollar plan is only Phase I of the same \$6.7 billion plan voters rejected last year. RTA's master plan is clear that the RTA wants to build Phase II in order to complete the entire system.

3. **Won't reduce traffic congestion.** Even the RTA admits its proposed rail plan will not significantly reduce traffic congestion. That's because most train riders will come from buses, not cars. The RTA would waste billions of our tax dollars on two rail lines that would increase transit ridership by about the equivalent of ten good bus routes.

4. **Will foreclose other traffic solutions.** While failing to reduce traffic congestion, RTA rail would use up tax dollars that could pay for something that would work.

Please vote NO on the RTA taxes.

Rebuttal of statement for

Despite a \$4 billion price tag, the proposed rail system will carry few new transit riders. Even the RTA's own Expert Review Panel concluded that moving existing bus riders onto trains will not reduce congestion. The commuter trains would carry no more passengers than 4 new bus routes, and light rail trains no more than 10 new bus routes. This bus service could be provided for a small fraction of the cost of the trains.

STATEMENT PREPARED BY: NORMAN L. WINN, DAVID
J.R. PECKARSKY, ARLENE L. HILMER



Regional Transit Authority

Regional Transit Authority district boundary

The area inside the district boundary shows the portions of King and Snohomish counties where the RTA's Ten-Year Regional Transit System Plan benefits would be directly realized and, in which local taxes (if authorized by voters within the district boundaries) would be collected.

