



SCA Public Issues Committee Minutes

February 12, 2014 – 7:00 PM
Renton City Hall, Council Chambers
1055 S Grady Way, Renton, WA 98057

1. Welcome and Roll Call

PIC Chair Mayor Bernie Talmas, Woodinville, called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. 32 cities had representation ([Attachment A](#)). Guests present included: John Stilin, Redmond City Council; Bill Pelosa, Auburn City Council; Dawn Dofelmire, Algona City Council; Mayor Mary Jane Goss, Lake Forest Park; Paula Waters, Woodinville City Council; Stacy Goodman, Issaquah City Council; Mayor John Marchione, Redmond; Benson Wong, Mercer Island City Council; Layne Barnes, Maple Valley City Council; Carol Benson, Black Diamond City Council; Diane Carlson, King County Executive's Office; Joyce Nichols, City of Bellevue; and Will Knedlik, Eastside Transit Riders United.

Chair Talmas welcomed all the members and guests to the meeting.

2. Public Comment

Chair Talmas asked if any member of the public had any public comment.

Will Knedlik, submitted written comments ([Attachment B](#)) about fully funding Metro Transit into the record and summarized the comments for the PIC.

There was no other public comment. Talmas closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

3. Approval of the January 8, 2014 Minutes

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, moved, seconded by Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, to approve the January 8, 2014 meeting minutes.

The motion passed unanimously.

4. Chair's Report

Chair Talmas briefly reviewed the Pre-PIC meeting, "Compromise is Not a Four Letter Word" presented by Ann Macfarlane, Jurassic Parliament and noted it was valuable training. He also reported that PIC leadership and staff met with Ann Macfarlane recently for PIC training. As a result of that training, Talmas noted, he would be utilizing some additional techniques to make the meeting run efficiently. Talmas noted that he will allow all members who would like to speak on a topic to do so before a member speaks a second time. Talmas noted that he may utilize a "round robin" discussion on issues before amendments to a motion are offered.

Lastly, Talmas encouraged new members to speak up as all voices are important and need to be heard.

5. Executive Director's Report

Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director, reported that the SCA Board of Directors recently held their annual board retreat. Dawson noted that Mayor John Marchione, Board President and Mayor Matt Larson, Board Vice President, were present at the PIC. Dawson noted that over the last couple of years the SCA Board of Directors focused on organizational changes. This year the Board focused on long range planning. Long range goals that were identified by the Board were: building effective partnerships with King County; working on breaking down partisan logjams; and providing significant value to all members. Priority issues identified for 2014 were transportation funding, human services, economic development, and the King County budget.

Dawson noted that there is already work going on in many of the priority areas. The SCA Board of Directors has created a Human Services Committee to begin acting more proactively in the human services arena. Dawson is involved in the Health and Human Services Transformation Plan and the Youth Action Plan at the County, and will be reporting back to and seeking feedback from membership.

ED Dawson noted that the first networking dinner of 2014 will be held on Wednesday, February 19th. Seattle Mayor Ed Murray is the speaker and Microsoft is the sponsor.

ED Dawson also discussed a new SCA feature; SCA is featuring one elected official per week on SCA's Facebook and Twitter feeds. Dawson encouraged members to send interesting member stories to SCA staff, Deanna@soundcities.org. Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, and Mayor Leanne Guier, Pacific, have been featured to date.

ED Dawson announced that Monica Whitman is leaving SCA and going to work as a Senior Transportation Planner for the city of Kent. ED Dawson and the PIC members thanked Monica for her work with SCA. ED Dawson asked PIC members to be understanding as SCA will be short staffed for a time.

6. PIC Operating Policies

ED Dawson reviewed the item. Dawson noted that at the January 8, 2014 PIC meeting, a number of PIC members asked that staff bring back draft language to add clarification to the PIC Operating Policies regarding the length of time for public comment at PIC meetings.

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, moved, seconded by Deputy Mayor Catherine Stanford, Lake Forest Park, to amend the PIC Operating Policies to add the following language under Section C – "Meetings are open to the public. The agenda shall include ten (10) minutes at the beginning of each regularly scheduled meeting for public comment. Each speaker shall be allowed a maximum of two (2) minutes to speak. The period for public comment may be amended at the discretion of the Chair, depending on the length of the agenda, and the number of individuals wishing to comment."

Councilmember Kruller noted Tukwila had a five minute limit that could be reduced to two minutes in the event of busy meetings. Dawson noted that the proposed time limits are a starting point for discussion; city time limits vary.

Councilmember Andy Rheume, Bothell, noted that two minutes was too short a time. Councilmember Rheume moved, seconded by Councilmember Shawn McEvoy, Normandy Park, to amend the motion to allow each speaker a maximum of four (4) minutes to speak. Rheume noted the PIC had only had one public commenter in two years.

A number of PIC members felt that two minutes was a reasonable time limit and others felt that the proposed time limit was too short. There was a discussion about allowing the PIC chair to have discretion for the length of time a speaker speaks during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Chair Talmas called for a vote on the amendment to allow each speaker a maximum of four (4) minutes to speak.

Normandy Park and Bothell voted yes on the amendment. The cities of Algona, Auburn, Beaux Arts Village, Black Diamond, Burien, Carnation, Covington, Des Moines, Duvall, Enumclaw, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kenmore, Kent, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Maple Valley, Mercer Island, Newcastle, North Bend, Pacific, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, SeaTac, Shoreline, Skykomish, Snoqualmie, Tukwila and Woodinville voted no. The motion failed.

Councilmember Chris Roberts, Shoreline, noted that according to the draft policy, the PIC chair has the discretion to adjust the total time for public comments but not the time an individual speaker can speak. Roberts added that there would need to be an amendment to give the chair the discretion to amend the time limit for individual speakers if that was the intent of the membership.

Mayor Baker, Kenmore, moved, seconded by Councilmember McEvoy, Normandy Park, to amend the motion to remove the two minute time limit per speaker and to give the chair discretion on the amount of time a speaker can speak.

There was a discussion about the value of setting a time limit per speaker, with some of the members having a position that time limits are predictable and fair and allow people to adequately prepare. Other comments included limiting comments to two minutes but allowing for discretion by the chair.

Chair Talmas called for a vote on the amendment to remove the two minute time limit per speaker and to give the chair discretion on the amount of time a speaker can speak.

Bothell and Kenmore voted yes on the amendment. The cities of Algona, Auburn, Beaux Arts Village, Black Diamond, Burien, Carnation, Covington, Des Moines, Duvall, Enumclaw, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kent, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Maple Valley, Mercer Island, Newcastle,

Normandy Park, North Bend, Pacific, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, SeaTac, Shoreline, Skykomish, Snoqualmie, Tukwila and Woodinville voted no.
The motion failed.

Mayor Pro Tem Henry Sladek, Skykomish, Called for the Question.

Chair Talmas called for a vote on the Call for the Question. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Talmas called for a vote on the main motion, "Meetings are open to the public. The agenda shall include ten (10) minutes at the beginning of each regularly scheduled meeting for public comment. Each speaker shall be allowed a maximum of two (2) minutes to speak. The period for public comment may be amended at the discretion of the Chair, depending on the length of the agenda, and the number of individuals wishing to comment."

Bothell and Normandy Park voted no. The cities of Algona, Auburn, Beaux Arts Village, Black Diamond, Burien, Carnation, Covington, Des Moines, Duvall, Enumclaw, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kenmore, Kent, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Maple Valley, Mercer Island, Newcastle, North Bend, Pacific, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, SeaTac, Shoreline, Skykomish, Snoqualmie, Tukwila and Woodinville voted yes.
The motion passed.

7. PIC Nominating Committee Recommendation

Redmond Council President Hank Margeson, Chair of the 2014 PIC Nominating Committee, reported that the PIC Nominating Committee met recently to discuss nominees for the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) and the King Conservation District Advisory Committee (KCDAC). Margeson welcomed Councilmember Ed Prince, Renton, to the Nominating Committee where he joined Margeson, Mayor Leanne Guier, Pacific and Councilmember Ross Loudonback, North Bend.

Margeson reported that there is one member and one alternate vacancy on the GMPC. There are three vacancies for alternates on the King Conservation District Advisory Committee.

Chair Hank Margeson, Redmond, moved, seconded by Mayor Baker, Kenmore, to recommend to the SCA Board of Directors the appointment of Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, to the GMPC member position and Councilmember John Stilin, Redmond, to the GMPC alternate position; and the appointments of Councilmember Hank Myers, Redmond; Councilmember Mary Lou Pauly, Issaquah; and Mayor Mary Jane Goss, Lake Forest Park; as alternates to the King Conservation District Advisory Committee.

The motion passed unanimously.

8. Transportation Funding

ED Dawson provided a brief overview of the transportation funding picture. Dawson briefly reviewed SCA's efforts to get a state transportation package passed in 2013 and SCA's policy position on a state package, including support for a local option to fund roads and transit. Dawson noted that the King County Council had voted unanimously earlier in the week to

form a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) and that the King County Council had expressed widespread support for a 60/40 distribution split and a \$60 vehicle license fee and a .1% sales tax increase. Dawson reviewed Redmond's proposed amendment to the SCA position. Redmond's proposed amendment has three points;

1. Memorializing the 60/40 split;
2. Ensuring that the amounts proposed are the maximums that could be levied und the TBD; and
3. The need for an interlocal agreement (ILA) to memorialize the distribution formula, and to account for contingencies should challenges be brought to the TBD.

Chair Talmas stated he would be using the round robin procedure on this item, where he would go around the room and hear from each member before accepting amendments to the proposed policy.

Councilmember Chris Roberts, Shoreline, noted that Shoreline took a position in support of this policy and believes they would support the Redmond amendment. Roberts noted Shoreline's concerns with the regressive nature of the tax.

Councilmember Ross Loudenback, North Bend, stated that North Bend opposes the policy as they believe it is an additional subsidy to Metro.

Councilmember Amy Ockerlander, Duvall, stated that Duvall had not yet taken an official position but that Mayor Ibershof strongly supports the position. Ockerlander was supportive with the caveat that if the Duvall City Council did not support the position at a later date, they would inform the SCA Board of Directors of that position.

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, stated that this would have value to transit and other cities so Tukwila would support the policy. Kruller also noted this is a signal to Olympia that if they won't act, King County will.

Deputy Mayor Catherine Stanford, Lake Forest Park, stated that her council supports the position. They do not agree it is the best funding tool but without state funding, cities and counties are limited in their options. Stanford also noted the 17% transit cuts would have a dramatic impact on Lake Forest Park. Stanford felt the Redmond amendment was consistent with the policy position.

Councilmember Mike Sando, Enumclaw, stated that Enumclaw was opposed to the position due to equity issues.

Councilmember Erin Weaver, Maple Valley, supported the policy position.

Mayor David Baker, Kenmore, supported the policy position. Kenmore stands to gain substantially. Baker can also support the amendment.

Mayor Jim Berger, Carnation, stated that Carnation voted to oppose the policy due to equity issues and the lack of existing transit in the city. Carnation is concerned with roads between cities and is also concerned the TBD lets the state off the hook for their transportation responsibilities.

Deputy Mayor Dan Grausz, Mercer Island, stated Mercer Island supports the policy. Mercer Island is concerned about the lack of bus service on the island and about lack of park and ride space.

Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, stated that Algona is not supporting the policy. Algona will see a net loss with the TBD.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, stated that Issaquah had four issues with the TBD and met with the Executive's office staff to address those issues; 1. Will this save Metro – Issaquah heard yes. 2. Issaquah has real frustration with the legislature and it is difficult to separate that from this issue. 3. The proposal is for a volatile and regressive tax method. 4. Issaquah is concerned about the benefits for regional transit, and the amount Issaquah puts into the system versus the amount of service it receives. After receiving feedback on these questions from King County and SCA staff, Issaquah is in support of the policy and is in support of the Redmond amendment.

Councilmember Andy Rheaume, Bothell, stated Bothell is not in support of the policy. Rheaume referenced a Seattle Times article dated January 29 about the poor transit score that currently exists in Bothell.

Councilmember Ed Prince, Renton, stated that Renton supported the policy and the Redmond position.

Councilmember Tom Odell, Sammamish, supports the policy. Odell also supports the Redmond amendment. Odell noted that he was concerned about voter fatigue for tax increases.

Councilmember Nancy Tosta, Burien, noted Burien supports the proposed policy and Redmond's amendment. Tosta noted that Metro cuts would have severe impacts in Burien.

Deputy Mayor John Drescher, Newcastle, stated that Newcastle is against the policy position. Newcastle has concerns about the county vs. the state issue; finds the addition to sales tax too high; and too high a percentage of revenue is devoted to Metro instead of roads.

Councilmember Bill Boyce, Kent, noted that Kent is neutral at the moment. He reminded members of former Mayor Pete Lewis's position that if something doesn't hurt your city and helps other cities, your city should support it.

ED Dawson reviewed the bylaws and noted that the bylaws required 2/3 of those present to support in order to move a position forward to the board. An abstention would have the effect of a no vote.

Councilmember Shelley Kloba, Kirkland, noted that Kirkland had discussed preemption and established a TBD to keep their options open. Kirkland generally supports the policy. Kloba asked a clarifying question about the proposed Redmond amendment.

Councilmember Jeanette Burrage, Des Moines, stated that Des Moines had also discussed the issue of whether the county acting would have the effect of preempting the city from forming its own TBD.

Mayor Talmas, Woodinville, noted that Woodinville had voted to support the policy but still had concerns. Woodinville can also support the Redmond amendment.

Councilmember Marlla Mhoon Covington, noted that Covington had a TBD on the ballot last year that failed by a narrow margin. Covington will be neutral on this position.

Councilmember Barry Ladenburg, SeaTac, stated that SeaTac will support the policy and agrees with the Redmond amendment.

Councilmember Shawn McEvoy, Normandy Park, stated Normandy Park is neutral on the policy.

Councilmember Tammy Deady, Black Diamond, stated Black Diamond will be holding a public hearing on the TBD issue soon. There are some concerns about the additional tax burden on residents.

Councilmember Tom Stowe, Beaux Arts Village, noted the TBD would lead to a net negative for Beaux Arts Village but the city was neutral on the policy at this time.

Mayor Matt Larson, Snoqualmie, stated that the Snoqualmie City Council supported the policy. Snoqualmie agrees there are equity issues but recognizes the TBD is a solution, though not a perfect one.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, stated that Auburn supports the position and the Redmond amendment. Auburn feels that there is not enough benefit to cities for local roads in the statewide package. The transit component is important to Auburn.

Mayor Pro Tem Henry Sladek, Skykomish, stated that Skykomish will support the policy as it helps the rest of the county and the cities.

Mayor Leanne Guier, Pacific, noted that Pacific had also discussed forming a TBD. Pacific had not adopted a position of support of the policy.

Deputy Mayor Jeanne Burbidge, Federal Way, noted that Federal Way has the TBD issue on a future agenda. Burbidge will support the policy with the caveat that if the Federal Way City Council does not support the position at a later date, they would inform the SCA Board of Directors of that position.

Chair Talmas summed up the comments generally. Talmas suggested that given the comments, the PIC may wish to bring forward the Redmond amendment for a vote.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, made a motion:

Sound Cities Association (SCA) supports the formation of a countywide Transportation Benefit District (TBD) in King County and a public vote to raise revenue for a countywide TBD to address critical transportation needs facing the County and cities throughout the County, provided that:

- 60% of the funds are distributed to Metro for transit service and 40% of the funds are directly distributed to the County and cities based on population to be used for transportation needs authorized under state law, including maintenance and preservation of roads and bridges, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and additional transit, as determined by each jurisdiction; and
- An annual Vehicle License Fee up to \$60 per vehicle and imposition of a sales tax up to 0.1% shall be the maximum amount submitted to the voters by the King County TBD; and
- Any resolution adopted by the King County TBD submitting a transportation funding ballot measure to the voters shall require that an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) shall be developed and executed by the cities, County and the King County TBD prior to the collection of any revenue, which shall address risk management and provide for 60% of the funds to be distributed for Metro transit service and 40% of the funds to be directly distributed to the County and cities based on population for transportation needs, as determined by each jurisdiction, as long as the Transportation Benefit District collects revenue from any source.

Councilmember Roberts, Shoreline, seconded the motion.

Council President Margeson, Redmond, addressed Councilmember Kloba's question regarding the third clause.

Deputy Mayor Grausz, Mercer Island, expressed concern about whether the language of the third clause would mean that one city could hold up the process by not signing the ILA. ED Dawson and Mayor Marchione addressed this question.

There was additional discussion about collection of the revenue and questions about what would happen to monies allocated to a city if that city did not sign an ILA.

Chair Talmas asked Diane Carlson, King County Executive's office, to address the questions. Carlson stated there is time to have ILA's signed before revenue is collected. Carlson also noted the County considered a signed ILA a requirement for the distribution of funds.

Chair Talmas called for a vote on the motion.

The cities of Auburn, Burien, Des Moines, Duvall, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kenmore, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Maple Valley, Mercer Island, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, SeaTac,

Shoreline, Skykomish, Snoqualmie, Tukwila and Woodinville voted yes. The cities of Bothell, Carnation, Enumclaw, Newcastle and North Bend voted no. The motion passed by a vote of 20-5. The position will be advanced to the Board.

9. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Property Acquisition Fund

Monica Whitman, Senior Policy Analyst, introduced the item. She described a TOD fund, a land acquisition and land banking financing revolving loan fund to stimulate and incentivize affordable housing as part of transit oriented development in proximity to transit. Such a fund is seeded by public funds; in this case, \$5 million dollars could leverage a TOD fund of \$20-\$25 million. The PSRC Executive Board discussed the merits of a number of potential funding sources at their meeting on January 23, 2014. The Board unanimously approved a proposal by King County to create a Business Plan for such a fund which includes directing PSRC to convene a Central Puget Sound TOD Fund Working Group to oversee development of the business plan.

Chair Talmas noted that any comments on the TOD Property Acquisition Fund should be directed to Deanna at deanna@soundcities.org.

Deputy Mayor Catherine Stanford, Lake Forest Park asked if the proposal was related to the Growing Transit Communities work. Whitman replied that it was all integrated and that the same team at PSRC that work on Growing Transit Communities will be staffing this effort.

There was a discussion about the funding sources and why PSRC is concentrating on this issue. Whitman replied that all potential revenue sources (federal, state, local, private), including options for leveraging multiple fund sources, are on the table.

Chair Talmas requested this item be brought back to the March PIC meeting.

12. Upcoming Events

- a) SCA Networking Dinner – Wednesday, February 19, 2014 – 5:30 PM
Renton Pavilion Events Center –Seattle Mayor Ed Murray, Keynote Speaker
- b) SCA Public Issues Committee Meeting – Wednesday, March 12, 2014 – 7:00 PM
Renton City Hall

13. For the Good of the Order

Mayor Baker, Kenmore noted that NLC University will hold 11 training seminars at the NLC Congressional City Conference in Washington, D.C. on March 8 and 9, 2014.

The NLC University will host 11 training seminars on March 8 and 9 at the National League of Cities' Congressional City Conference in Washington, D.C. Launched at NLC's Congress of Cities in November, NLC University is a new, collaborative education and professional development initiative that helps municipal leaders—both elected and appointed—build the skills they need to better govern, serve, and advocate for their communities. Training seminars this year cover a variety of topics such as grant writing, budgeting and finance, downtown re-development, pensions, fostering positive police-community relations, performance management for sustainability initiatives, connecting families to key federal

supports, and public leadership in the information age. For more information about the NLC University and to register for trainings at the Congressional City Conference, please visit: www.nlc.org/university

Mayor Baker also noted that as a member of the Local Hazardous Waste Management Coordination Committee he signed a letter urging state legislators to move mercury lighting take back program legislation out of the rules committee.

Councilmember Tom Odell, Sammamish, announced he will be serving on the NLC Western Municipal Association. The Association will be holding a marijuana impact panel focused on Washington and Oregon at the NLC Conference.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn noted that Auburn is very concerned about SB 6162 / HB 1287 which would provide a property tax exemption for tribally owned land. ED Dawson noted that SCA staff would follow up.

Councilmember Barry Ladenburg, SeaTac called members' attention to SB 6307 which would preempt cities from adopting minimum wage and sick leave policies for workers. Ladenburg noted Seattle had enacted their sick leave policy.

14. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

2014 Roll Call – Public Issues Committee Meeting February 12, 2014

City	Representative	Alternate	Other	Staff
Algona	Dave Hill	Dawn Dofelmire		
Auburn	Nancy Backus	Bill Peloza		
Beaux Arts	Tom Stowe	Richard Leider		
Black Diamond	Janie Edelman	Tamie Deady	Carol Benson	
Bothell	Andy Rheaume	Tom Agnew		
Burien	Nancy Tosta	Stephen Armstrong		
Carnation	Jim Berger	Lee Grumman		
Clyde Hill	Barre Seibert	George Martin		
Covington	Marlla Mhoon	Margaret Harto/Jeff Wagner		
Des Moines	Melissa Musser	Jeanette Burrage		
Duvall	Amy Ockerlander	Scott Thomas		
Enumclaw	Mike Sando	Liz Reynolds		
Federal Way	Dini Duclos	Jeanne Burbidge		
Hunts Point	Joseph Sabey			
Issaquah	Tola Marts	Stacy Goodman		
Kenmore	David Baker			
Kent	Bill Boyce	Dennis Higgins		
Kirkland	Toby Nixon	Shelley Kloba		
Lake Forest Park	Catherine Stanford	Tom French	Mary Jane Goss	
Maple Valley	Erin Weaver	Layne Barnes		
Medina	Michael Luis			
Mercer Island	Dan Grausz	Benson Wong		
Milton	Jim Manley	Debra Perry		
Newcastle	Lisa Jensen	John Drescher		
Normandy Park	Shawn McEvoy	Susan West		
North Bend	Ross Loudenback	Ken Hearing		
Pacific	Leanne Guier	Vic Kave		
Redmond	Hank Margeson	John Stilin	John Marchione	
Renton	Ed Prince	Denis Law		
Sammamish	Tom Odell	Bob Keller		
SeaTac	Barry Ladenburg	Mia Gregerson		
Shoreline	Chris Roberts	Chris Eggen		
Skykomish	Henry Sladek			
Snoqualmie	Kingston Wall	Matt Larson		
Tukwila	Kate Kruller	Verna Seal		
Woodinville	Bernie Talmas	Susan Boundy-Sanders	Paula Waters	
SCA				Deanna Dawson Kristy Burwell Monica Whitman Doreen Booth

Electeds present are highlighted in gray. Cities represented are **bolded**.

Testimony to King County Council

February 4, 2014

My name is Will Knedlik and I am appearing tonight on behalf of Eastside Transit Riders United in order to request this Council to ensure development of fully sound funding for Metro Transit.

King County Executive Dow Constantine's bold proposal for increasing and stabilizing revenues for transit services, through a local Transportation Benefit District, provides the best opportunity in several decades for public transit finances that can be made, thereby, both far more sustainable for each person reliant thereon, and also substantially more equitable for every county taxpayer.

Equally important, and likewise worthy of genuine praise, this courageous proposal focuses upon the quintessential necessity to **reduce** fares for less financially able residents, who are often most dependent on transit programs for crucial mobility needs, but who have been increasingly priced out of government-financed transportation by fare increases, repeatedly, over the last half decade.

However, particulars drafted by Metro Transit managers and by other county employees – as set forth in the opening iteration – jeopardize the great potential of our Executive's critical initiative.

For example, the fare reduction offered to ameliorate one price hike after another, which has been and is cumulatively forcing the poorest off transit vehicles that they most need, shows inadequate appreciation of this core problem's severity and too much timidity in the change being suggested.

The initial draft would charge genuinely poor transit users, after specific documentation based on federal poverty statistics, **twice as much** as elderly and handicapped passengers currently pay for reduced fares based on a political assumption about limited financial abilities to afford transport.

Simply put in dollars and cents, Metro currently charges persons over 65 and handicapped riders 75 cents per ride, while the draft proposal would charge certifiably poor people \$1.50 each way.

Clearly, either this has not been thought carefully through or else well-paid bureaucrats at Metro Transit who have drafted such a proposal simply do **not** understand those most in need of transit, despite such managers seldom, if ever, failing to invoke vital mobility needs of transit-dependent riders even while pricing those very users off buses and trains, repeatedly, for several years now.

Whichever the cause may be, this early proposal is thus as unready for prime time as it is pivotal.

As estimable as Executive Constantine's outline is in core matters referenced, draft formulations also fail to resolve a further immense defect in Metro Transit, and would in fact **worsen already-gross inequities** in transit services for two thirds of local residents who now live in King County.

Today, east-and-south county taxpayers respectively fund *circa* 35 and 30 percent of total Metro costs, largely through sales taxes, but we receive just 17 and 20 percent of that agency's essential transportation services, largely because of a huge shift of tax dollars in order thereby to subsidize transit services for Seattle residents and businesses, which thus leaves insufficient funds to close major transit gaps within those two subareas, and which in turn precludes vital public transport between major employment opportunities in east county and key housing stocks in south county.

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The new Transportation Benefit District would certainly make this disparity worse, beyond any reasonable dispute, although specific numbers require answers to requests for fiscal data that the Eastside Transportation Association presented to Metro Transit in writing during January, 2014.

Also lacking is indication of **how** Metro Transit will reduce its hugely expensive operating costs of \$155.38 per hour, beyond repeatedly asking transit operators to freeze negotiated wages, since this rate for 2012 is not just among the highest reported by the National Transit Database for our nation, anywhere, but is so extreme that Sound Transit has recently dropped Metro and started to buy driver-and-related services from Pierce Transit to operate its bus fleet in parts of **our** county.

While Executive Constantine inherited this unsustainable cost structure for Metro Transit from his predecessor, and while he would appear to be systematic in pursuing solutions, major cost centers exist beyond unionized workers, *e.g.*, in rather sizeable and quite pricey managerial bureaucracy.

Thus, whether each driver in King County should pay \$60 for every car, as a highly regressive tax on the poorest vehicle owners, must be reasonably understood before informed voting is feasible, given disproportionate harm done to wallets of those least-flush motorists, which adds to already-unfair treatment of east-and-south county residents and further imperils a tax ballot (particularly after a decade-long series of statewide initiatives opposing such auto-based funding for transit).

Because Executive Constantine's leadership affords our region with such an important potential for resolving crucial transit issues, which would likely be lost were drivers **not** to accept as fair a shift of still more transit costs onto car owners, the east-and-south county majority of this Council should take the lead in refining a tax ballot that can fulfill fiduciary duties owed to constituents to ensure that transit services are proportional to transit taxes, and do not further worsen unfairness, whereby suburbs already pay **nearly twice as much** in transit taxes as received in transit services.

Forceful guidance for refining a fully equitable Transportation Benefit District is necessary from government officials elected in east-and-south King County, who have often complained about their constituents paying much too much for transit services, while receiving far too few, through the Eastside Transportation Partnership and South County Area Transportation Board, but who have usually failed to be as vigorous for their citizens as officials elected in Seattle, so as to result in east-and-south county taxpayers paying ever more in transit taxes while receiving less transit.

An essential first step toward such leadership is a guarantee that any transit-tax ballot measure is fully equitable for east-and-south county residents, who pay two thirds of all transit taxes today, who have been overtaxed and underserved for years and who are eligible to cast two thirds of all ballots against any package that fails to restore some reasonable transit-and-tax equity. If this is not resolvable in time for the low-turnout Special Election in late April, then it can and should be achieved to meet the schedule required for a far-higher-turnout Primary Election in early August.

If equity cannot be so obtained, then I request appointment to oppose an unfair transit-tax ballot.

While an earlier ballot date would be preferable to a later one – if east-and-south county residents can be protected as present-and-potential transit users and as nearly two thirds of King County's more-than-2 million taxpayers – a brief delay would allow review of lower cost fares in non-peak hours for low-income citizens, in order to shift optional trips through powerful pricing principles, and, perhaps, of Kemper Freeman's recent presentation suggesting **free** non-peak transit services.

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