

### **SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL**

## Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding Agenda

Friday, July 17, 2020 10:00 AM

Remote Meeting. Call 253-215-8782; Meeting ID: 586 416 9164; or Seattle Channel online.

Alex Pedersen, Chair
Dan Strauss, Vice-Chair
M. Lorena González, Member
Lisa Herbold, Member
Debora Juarez, Member
Andrew J. Lewis, Member
Tammy J. Morales, Member
Teresa Mosqueda, Member
Kshama Sawant, Member

Chair Info:206-684-8804; Alex.Pedersen@seattle.gov

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#### **Meeting Location:**

Remote Meeting. Call 253-215-8782; Meeting ID: 586 416 9164; or Seattle Channel online.

#### **Committee Website:**

http://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/seattle-transportation-benefit-district-funding

This meeting also constitutes a meeting of the City Council, provided that the meeting shall be conducted as a committee meeting under the Council Rules and Procedures, and Council action shall be limited to committee business.

In-person attendance is currently prohibited per Washington State Governor's Proclamation No. 20-28.7 through August 1, 2020. Meeting participation is limited to access by telephone conference line and Seattle Channel online.

Register online to speak during the Public Comment period at the 10:00 a.m. Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding meeting at

http://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/public-comment.

Online registration to speak at the Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding meeting will begin two hours before the 10:00 a.m. meeting start time, and registration will end at the conclusion of the Public Comment period during the meeting. Speakers must be registered in order to be recognized by the Chair.

Submit written comments to all Councilmembers at <a href="Council@seattle.gov">Council@seattle.gov</a>

Sign-up to provide Public Comment at the meeting at <a href="http://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/public-comment">http://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/public-comment</a> Watch live streaming video of the meeting at

http://www.seattle.gov/council/watch-council-live

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Please Note: Times listed are estimated

- A. Call To Order
- B. Approval of the Agenda
- C. Chair's Report
- D. Public Comment

(20 minutes)

E. Items of Business

#### 1. CB 119833

AN ORDINANCE relating to a sales and use tax; providing for the submission to qualified electors of the City at an election to be held on November 3, 2020, a proposition to collect a sales and use tax to fund transit and related transportation programs in Seattle.

#### **Supporting**

Documents: Summary and Fiscal Note

**Central Staff Memo** 

Amendment 1 (Pedersen-Herbold)

Amendment 2 (Pedersen)

<u>Amendment 3 (Morales-Gonzalez)</u>

Amendment 4 (Pedersen)

Amendment 5 (Herbold)

Amendment 6A (Sawant)

Amendment 6B (Pedersen-Herbold)

Amendment 7 (Morales-Pedersen)

**Briefing, Discussion, and Possible Vote** 

**Presenters:** Elliot Helmbrecht, Mayor's Office; Candida Lorenzana and Rachel VerBoort, Seattle Department of Transportation; Jennifer Malley-Crawford and Erin Tighe, Transit Advisory Board Co-Chairs; Calvin Chow, Council Central Staff

#### F. Adjournment





600 Fourth Ave. 2nd Floor Seattle, WA 98104

#### **Legislation Text**

File #: CB 119833, Version: 1

#### **CITY OF SEATTLE**

ORDINANCE	
COUNCIL BILL	

- AN ORDINANCE relating to a sales and use tax; providing for the submission to qualified electors of the City at an election to be held on November 3, 2020, a proposition to collect a sales and use tax to fund transit and related transportation programs in Seattle.
- WHEREAS, the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Chapter 36.73, provides for the establishment of transportation benefit districts by cities and counties and authorizes those districts to levy and impose various taxes and fees to generate revenues to support transportation improvements that benefit the district and that are consistent with state, regional, or local transportation plans and necessitated by existing or reasonably foreseeable congestion levels; and
- WHEREAS, City of Seattle Ordinance 123397 created the Seattle Transportation Benefit District for preserving and maintaining transportation infrastructure, improving public safety, implementing elements of the Seattle Transportation Strategic Plan and other planning documents, investing in bicycle, pedestrian, freight mobility and transit enhancements, and providing people with choices to meet their mobility needs; and
- WHEREAS, in STBD Resolution 12, the Governing Board of the STBD submitted a ballot measure ("STBD Proposition 1") to the qualified electors of the STBD to authorize up to a 0.1 percent sales and use tax and an annual vehicle license fee of up to an additional \$60 per registered vehicle with a \$20 rebate for low-income individuals, for the purposes of funding additional transit service in Seattle for a six-year term expiring on December 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on November 4, 2014, STBD Proposition 1 was approved by a majority of qualified electors of

the STBD; and

- WHEREAS, on December 1, 2014, in STBD Resolution 14, the Governing Board of the STBD imposed the revenue measures authorized by the voters through the approval of STBD Proposition 1; and
- WHEREAS, on July 8, 2016, by Ordinance 125070, The City of Seattle assumed the rights, powers, immunities, functions, and obligations of the STBD as authorized under RCW 36.74.030; and
- WHEREAS, The City of Seattle, having assumed the powers of the Seattle Transportation Benefit District, has the authority to seek voter approval for the Council to enact up to a 0.2 percent sales and use tax for transportation improvements under RCW 82.14.0455; and
- WHEREAS, on June 29, 2018, by Ordinance 125606, The City of Seattle authorized material scope changes to STBD Proposition 1, including provisions to provide transit passes to Seattle Public School students, expanding the ORCA Opportunity Program and authorizing capital improvements to improve transit speed and reliability; and
- WHEREAS, since passage of STBD Proposition 1 in 2014, The City of Seattle has been able to expand bus service by over 8,000 new weekly trips, make bus service more reliable and increase access to very frequent (ten minutes or better) bus service within a ten-minute walk from 25 percent of households in 2015 to 70 percent in 2019; and
- WHEREAS, STBD funded transit equity and access initiatives provided ORCA Opportunity cards to 15,000

  Seattle public high school students and Promise Scholars, 500 income-qualified middle school students, and 1,500 Seattle Housing Authority residents; and
- WHEREAS, voters statewide approved Initiative 976 in spite of 76 percent of voters in Seattle rejecting this

  Tim Eyman measure intended to undermine Seattle's transit needs; and
- WHEREAS, The City of Seattle joined other parties in challenging the constitutionality of I-976, including its repeal of Vehicle License Fee authority under RCW 82.80.140; and
- WHEREAS, the City's legal authority to fix, impose, and extend up to a one hundred dollar vehicle license fee

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under RCW 82.80.140 with approval of a majority of City voters has been thrown into question by statewide passage of I-976 which, in part, attempts to repeal this authority, potentially in an unconstitutional manner; and

- WHEREAS, the City wishes to maintain sufficient transit service and access to opportunity made possible by

  Proposition 1, while also facilitating COVID-19 response and the recovery of the economy with

  mobility for essential workers, job seekers, students, and others who will continue to rely on transit, and
  while also mitigating impacts from the closure of the West Seattle Bridge; and
- WHEREAS, because of the importance of the regional public transit network in promoting equitable transit access in communities throughout King County, the City of Seattle supports future efforts to enact a countywide transit funding measure that incorporates transit service and access opportunities for Seattle residents in accordance with the equity and sustainability principles detailed in the King County Mobility Framework, and the City intends to work with King County in partnership on a future transit measure that could be approved by countywide voters, thereby allowing the City to consolidate or phase -out this funding measure; and
- WHEREAS, in the meantime, King County Metro has agreed to continue partnering with The City of Seattle in providing expanded transit service to Seattle residents through renewal of service purchase agreements it entered with the City following passage of STBD Proposition 1 in 2014; NOW, THEREFORE,

#### BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City of Seattle a proposition to authorize up to a 0.1 percent sales and use tax for a six-year term ending December 31, 2026. This sales and use tax replaces the \$60 Vehicle License Fee and 0.1 percent sales and use tax first authorized by Seattle voters in 2014 for a six -year term expiring at the end of 2020. If approved by voters, the revenues will be used solely for the purpose of maintaining transit service and access to frequent transit service for Seattle neighborhoods, students and low income individuals, including associated maintenance and capital improvements that serve efficient operation

of transit service; emerging mobility needs to support COVID-19 recovery and the Reconnect West Seattle strategy to mitigate the ongoing closure of the West Seattle High Bridge; community-led oversight; and continuation of programs to increase transit access for low income residents, seniors and students.

Section 2. Use of revenues. The funds raised by this proposition ("Proposition 1 revenues") will be used solely for the transit and transportation purposes as described in this ordinance and associated administrative costs. Proposition 1 revenues will first be used to pay any required administrative costs to the state Department of Revenue and elections costs.

Remaining Proposition 1 revenues will be used to fund:

A. Service hours on King County Metro operated services with more than 65 percent of stops within Seattle, consistent with the Seattle Transit Master Plan and King County Metro Transit's Service Guidelines; and

B. King County Metro transit service hours on current and future RapidRide lines serving Seattle, identified in the Seattle Transit Master Plan and King County Metro's long-range plan (Metro CONNECTS); and

C. Up to 10 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support the implementation, management, and administration of programs to support transit access by low income residents, seniors and youth, including the ORCA Opportunity program, which provides transit passes for Seattle Public Schools students in grades K-12, as well as students participating in the Seattle Promise scholarship or other similar programs at Seattle colleges and universities, along with programs targeted to seniors and public housing residents; and

D. Up to 9 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support infrastructure maintenance and capital improvements to maximize the efficiency of transit operations, including enhancements to transit speed, passenger amenities, transit street pavement maintenance, and reliability of transit service operated by King County Metro within the City of Seattle; and

E. Up to 6 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support emerging mobility needs related to COVID-19 response and recovery, and closure of the West Seattle High Bridge. Such investments could include transit service, speed and reliability improvements and Transportation Demand Management strategies described in the community-driven Reconnect West Seattle plan. The City expects these needs to require designated funding for approximately the first four years of the measure. However, Council may continue to appropriate STBD funding for these programs in 2025 and 2026 as conditions warrant. These funds may also be used throughout the six-year term to support or pilot innovative partnerships with King County Metro.

Section 3. No supplanting of existing funding for transit service. Before funding any transit service, the City anticipates that there will be an interlocal agreement with King County Metro to provide that the Proposition 1 revenues will not supplant other funding for any routes partially or completely operating within Seattle that King County Metro would otherwise provide in accordance with the Seattle Transit Master Plan, and King County Metro's Transit Service Guidelines and long-range plan (Metro CONNECTS).

Section 4. Oversight. The City shall issue an annual report to the public that describes King County Metro's provision of transit service in Seattle and countywide, including service funded by Proposition 1 revenues and whether supplantation has occurred. The report will also analyze the impacts of service reductions, increases or changes approved by the Metropolitan King County Council or King County Metro in Seattle.

The community-led Seattle Transit Advisory Board will continue to serve as the public oversight committee charged with advising on spending of Proposition 1 revenues. Appointments to the Transit Advisory Board, the scope of its duties, and reporting requirements shall continue to be consistent with Resolution 31572, as adopted by Council in 2015, following passage of the 2014 Transportation Benefit District measure.

Section 5. Election - Ballot title. The City Council directs the City Clerk to file this ordinance with the

Director of Elections of King County, Washington, as ex officio supervisor of elections, requesting the Director of Elections to call and conduct a special election in conjunction with the state general election to be held on November 3, 2020, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the City the proposition set forth in this ordinance.

The City Clerk is directed to certify to the King County Director of Elections the ballot title approved by the City Attorney in accordance with the City Attorney's responsibilities under RCW 29A.36.071 and RCW 29A.72.050. The following ballot title containing a statement of subject and concise description are submitted to the City Attorney for consideration:

CITY OF SEATTLE

PROPOSITION NO. 1

The City of Seattle's Proposition 1 concerns funding for transit and related transportation needs in Seattle.

If approved, this proposition authorizes up to a 0.1% sales and use tax expiring December 31, 2026, and as proposed in Ordinance \_\_\_\_\_, to replace the current voter-approved 0.1% sales tax, expiring December 31, 2020.

Revenues are dedicated to: transit services benefitting Seattle residents, including frequent transit network maintenance and associated capital improvements; low-income fare programs for Seattle seniors, students and residents; and, for an initial period, transportation needs related to COVID-19 recovery and the West Seattle Bridge closure.

Should this proposition be approved?

Yes\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_

Those in favor shall vote "Yes"; those opposed shall mark their ballots "No".

Section 6. Severability. The provisions of this ordinance are declared to be separate and severable. The invalidity of any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or portion of this ordinance, or the invalidity of its application to any person or circumstance, does not affect the validity of the remainder of this ordinance or the validity of its application to other persons or circumstances

	on 7. Effectiveness	•			viding for the submi	ission of a ballot
		•		•	upon its approval b	
Passed	d by the City Cour	cil the	day of			2020, and signed by
me in open se	ession in authentica	ation of its p	passage this	day of _		, 2020.
					of the City Counci	_ 1
Appro	oved by me this	day	of		, 2020.	
			Jenny A. Dur			_
Filed	by me this	day of			, 2020.	
			Monica Marti	nez Simmo	ons, City Clerk	_
(Seal)						

#### **SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE\***

Department:	Dept. Contact/Phone:	CBO Contact/Phone:
SDOT	Bill LaBorde/206.484.8662	Christie Parker/206.684.5211

<sup>\*</sup> Note that the Summary and Fiscal Note describes the version of the bill or resolution as introduced; final legislation including amendments may not be fully described.

#### 1. BILL SUMMARY

**Legislation Title:** AN ORDINANCE relating to a sales and use tax; providing for the submission to qualified electors of the City at an election to be held on November 3, 2020, a proposition to collect a sales and use tax to fund transit and related transportation programs in Seattle.

Summary and background of the Legislation: On September 20, 2010, the Seattle City Council approved Ordinance 123397 to establish the Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD). The purpose of the measure was to allow the City of Seattle to leverage additional revenue to preserve and maintain transportation infrastructure and enhance Seattle transportation choices, including public transit. Upon establishing the STBD, its governing board imposed a \$20 annual vehicle license fee to fund these preservation and enhancement efforts.

On July 17, 2014, the STBD Board approved Resolution 12, placing a measure (Proposition 1) on the November 2014 General Election ballot for the purposes of funding Metro Transit service in Seattle. The ballot measure asked District voters to authorize an up to one-tenth of one percent sales and use tax, and an annual vehicle license fee of up to an additional \$60 per registered vehicle with a \$20 rebate for low income individuals. Council, acting as the STBD Board, established a December 31, 2020 sunset date for Proposition 1.

Proposition 1 passed with 62% approval and on December 1, 2014, the STBD board approved Resolution 14, fully imposing the vehicle license fee and sales tax. Subsequently, the state legislature authorized cities to subsume the authority and powers of a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) with boundaries contiguous with a city's following a public hearing and ordinance passage. Council took advantage of this authority by passing Ordinance 120570, which was signed by the Mayor in July 2016. Ordinance 125606 passed two years later in June 2018 incorporating material changes to the scope of Proposition 1 to accommodate the ORCA Opportunity program and other changes.

In November 2019, a majority of statewide voters passed I-976 which, among other provisions, removed state authorization of TBD vehicle license fee authority. While 76% of Seattle voters opposed I-976 and the City of Seattle, along with multiple co-plaintiffs, are challenging the constitutionality of I-976 in court, the Washington Supreme Court is unlikely to rule on this matter before a measure would need to be submitted to King County Elections for a November 3, 2020 election. For that reason, this legislation would renew only the 0.1% sales tax to maintain approximately half of the revenues approved by Seattle voters in 2014. This legislation prioritizes revenues for transit service to preserve the Frequent Transit

Network to the degree possible, while also allowing some funds to be spent on low income access programs as well as mobility needs that will help those impacted by fallout from the COVID-19 emergency and closure of the West Seattle Bridge. This measure would constitute a new STBD program that could be renewed by voters at the end of the stated 6-year term.

## 2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project? Yes X No

#### 3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Does this legislation amend the Adopted Budget? Yes X No

If the ballot measure is approved by Seattle voters, appropriations and revenues associated with this action will be included in future budget legislation.

Does the legislation have other financial impacts to the City of Seattle that are not reflected in the above, including direct or indirect, short-term or long-term costs?

This action authorizes the City to put forth a measure in the November 2020 election. The associated election costs are estimated to be \$761,000 to \$988,000, including costs for the Voter's Guide. If approved by voters, revenues will be substantially less than the current STBD program due to the lack of vehicle license fee revenues and the economic impacts of COVID-19 on sales tax collections. Nevertheless, voter approval of this measure will maintain a base level of funding to purchase transit service hours, fund capital improvements on key transit corridors, and fund low-income transit access programs now funded through the 2014 Proposition 1. In addition, the program includes transportation investments to help mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 and closure of the West Seattle Bridge. If this measure is approved, revenues and appropriations for the 2020 measure will be included in the 2021 Adopted Budget and subsequent budgets.

#### Is there financial cost or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation?

If this measure is not sent to the ballot and approved by voters, the City's additional purchases of King County Metro service are likely to cease by the March 2021 Metro Transit service change. ORCA Opportunity and other low-income programs would no longer have a dedicated source of funding.

3.a. Ap	propriations
т	his logislation adds, shanges, or deletes appropriations
1	his legislation adds, changes, or deletes appropriations.

**Appropriations Notes:** This legislation does not provide appropriations. If this measure is approved by Seattle voters, funds will be appropriated in future budget legislation. Annual appropriations are estimated as follows (dollars in millions):

Ī	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
	\$19.5M	\$27.1M	\$28.9M	\$30.4M	\$31.3M	\$32.3M	\$169.5M

The appropriations above have not been adjusted for accruals and ramp-down. Revenue collections are estimated to begin April 1, 2021.

#### 3.b. Revenues/Reimbursements

This legislation adds, changes, or deletes revenues or reimbursements.

**Revenue/Reimbursement Notes:** This legislation provides a proposal to be placed on the November 2020 ballot which, if approved, will provide an estimated \$169.5 million of dedicated revenue for transportation purposes over six years; slightly less than \$20 million of this revenue will be generated in 2021, and \$27 million will be generated in the first full year of collections in 2022. These revenues are not added to the City's budget through this legislation but will be accounted for in separate legislation if the measure is approved by voters. Annual revenues are estimated as follows (dollars in millions):

2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
\$19.5M	\$27.1M	\$28.9M	\$30.4M	\$31.3M	\$32.3M	\$169.5M

The revenues above have not been adjusted for accruals and ramp-down. Revenue collections are estimated to begin April 1, 2021.

#### 3.c. Positions

\_\_\_ This legislation adds, changes, or deletes positions.

**Position Notes:** This legislation does not add, change or delete positions. Depending on the outcome of the proposal, position additions, changes or deletions will be determined through separate budget legislation.

#### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- a. Does this legislation affect any departments besides the originating department?  $_{\rm No}$
- b. Is a public hearing required for this legislation? No

c. Does this legislation require landlords or sellers of real property to provide information regarding the property to a buyer or tenant?

No

d. Is publication of notice with *The Daily Journal of Commerce* and/or *The Seattle Times* required for this legislation?

No

e. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

f. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative. Does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? What is the Language Access plan for any communications to the public?

People of color in Seattle are more likely to be dependent on transit service for access to opportunities. If this measure fails, significant transit service will need to be cut, including added frequencies on several routes serving areas of the City with higher concentrations of people of color. Additionally, ORCA Opportunity cards distributed to all high school students, along with other low-income programs, will need to be eliminated or significantly reduced if this measure is not passed by Seattle voters.

g. If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program's desired goal(s).

The legislation requires annual written reports to the public and Council on program performance. It also requires citizen oversight through the Transit Advisory Board that was created by Council following passage of the 2014 STBD measure.

List attachments/exhibits below:

N/A



July 7, 2020

#### **MEMORANDUM**

To: Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding

From: Calvin Chow, Analyst

**Subject:** Proposed Ballot Measure to Renew STBD Transit Funding

On July 7, 2020, the Mayor transmitted legislation to place a ballot measure before Seattle voters to fund transit-related services, programs, and investments at the November 2020 General Election. To be certified for the November ballot, Council must pass and the Mayor must sign the legislation by August 4, 2020. The proposed legislation will be heard in the Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding, which is scheduled to meet remotely on July 10 and July 17, 2020.

#### **Background**

At the April 2014 Special Election, King County voters considered a county-wide transit funding measure to support King County Metro (Metro) service. The King County measure proposed a one-tenth of one percent sales tax and a \$60 vehicle license fee to raise revenue and avoid anticipated Metro service cuts. The measure failed, despite support from a large majority of voters in Seattle.

At the November 2014 General Election, Seattle voters considered a Seattle Transportation Benefit District<sup>1</sup> (STBD) proposed to support Metro transit service in Seattle. The STBD measure proposed a one-tenth of one percent sales tax and a \$60 vehicle license fee within the city limits, and was approved by Seattle voters. The STBD measure was established for six years, and the funding will expire on December 31, 2020.

The STBD measure allowed the City of Seattle to purchase additional transit service in support of the City's transit goals, and to improve and support access to transit for low-income transit riders. In June 2018, the Council adopted <u>Ordinance 125606</u> which expanded the STBD program to include free transit passes for Seattle Public School Students and to fund transit capital improvements that enhance transit speed, passenger amenities, and the reliability of bus service.

In 2019, prior to the economic downturn caused by COVID-19, the STBD measure generated \$56.2 million and provided approximately 300,000 transit service hours, 15,000 free bus passes for Seattle Public School students, and 1,500 free bus passes for Seattle Housing Authority

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The STBD was established in September 2010, under the authority of RCW <u>36.73</u>. The STBD was an independent governmental entity that had the same geographical boundaries as the City of Seattle, and was governed by a Board consisting of all 9 Seattle Councilmembers. In July 2016, the City of Seattle assumed all the rights, powers, immunities, functions and obligations of the STBD as a uthorized by changes in state law. This allows the STBD to be administered and governed as part of the City of Seattle's regular business.

residents. In 2019, the STBD also funded pilot projects including on-demand first-mile/last-mile via shuttle service and the Trailhead Direct shuttle.

At the November 2019 General Election, Washington voters approved Initiative 976, which prohibits the STBD from collecting vehicle license fees. The City has challenged the constitutionality of Initiative 976, and the case is being heard in the Washington Supreme Court. While there is no firm timeline for the Court's decision, the City received a temporary injunction to Initiative 976 and continues to collect the vehicle license fees while the issue is before the Court. If Initiative 976 is upheld, the City will need to refund the vehicle license fees that have been collected since the initiative went into effect, and the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is reserving sufficient STBD fund balance for refunds if the City's legal challenge is not successful.

In the first half of 2020, the COVID-19 emergency has reduced revenues from both sales tax and vehicle license fees. The City Budget Office currently projects a 16 percent decrease in sales tax and a five percent decrease in vehicle license fee revenue for 2020 compared to previously budgeted forecasts. In addition, quarantine and health concerns have reduced the demand for transit service. In April 2020, Metro reported that ridership was down approximately 75-80 percent compared to the previous year's baseline; in June 2020, Metro reported that ridership was down approximately 65-70 percent compared to baseline. The trajectory of economic recovery and transit ridership is not known at this time.

If the STBD measure is not renewed and no additional transit funding is identified, the City has sufficient STBD reserves to continue transit service purchases through Metro's March 2021 service change date. No alternate sources of funding to the proposed measure have been identified for continuing the other elements of the STBD program (the youth ORCA program, low-income access to transit program, and the transit capital program) past 2020.

#### **Executive Proposal**

The proposed legislation would place a ballot measure on the November 2020 General Election to renew the STBD transit funding. The Executive's proposal is to continue the one-tenth of one percent sales tax for six years, ending on December 31, 2026. Given the legal uncertainty around Initiative 976, the proposal does not include extending the vehicle license fee.

The proposed ballot measure includes four categories of eligible spending, with annual maximum limits on some of these categories. The proposed spending categories include:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In addition to the voter-approved \$60 vehicle license fee for transit service, the STBD also collects a councilmanic \$20 vehicle license fee for basic infrastructure maintenance.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> SDOT reduced 2019 and 2020 transit service purchases to provide the reserve of funds.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The Washington State Department of Transportation <u>website</u> tracks the impact of COVID-19 on transit ridership. The data show that Metro ridership is slowly increasing since a ridership low in early April 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Metro administers regular service changes in March and September of each year. The City's contract for Metro service allows the City to make changes in service hour purchases on this schedule. To manage the reduced STBD revenues and respond to lower transit demand, SDOT anticipates reducing purchased transit service levels in September to 150,000 annualized service hours.

- <u>Transit Service</u> STBD funds may be used to purchase Metro service hours on RapidRide lines and Metro routes that operate with more than 65 percent of stops within Seattle. The ballot measure does not put a restriction on the allowable spending in this category.
- Emerging Needs Up to \$6 million annually may be used to support emerging mobility needs related to COVID-19 response and recovery, and the closure of the West Seattle Bridge. This funding could support targeted transit service or transportation demand management strategies to mitigate the West Seattle Bridge closure. The measure anticipates that this spending would be implemented for the first four years of the proposal but could continue if warranted.
- Mobility Access Up to \$10 million annually may be used to implement programs that support transit access by low income residents, seniors and youth, including the ORCA Opportunity program, which provides transit passes for Seattle Public School students.
- <u>Transit Infrastructure</u> Up to \$9 million annually may be used for transit infrastructure maintenance and capital improvements.

The proposed ballot measure is projected to raise \$169 million over 6 years. If voters approve the measure, the sales tax would go into effect in April 2021, reflecting an administrative delay to implement the sales tax through the Washington State Department of Revenue.

For a comparison, Table 1 shows the average annual spending under the expiring STBD measure for 2019 and 2020 and the average annual spending of the proposed measure. Actual spending levels would be determined during the City's annual budget process, subject to the spending limitations established in the ballot measure; and the citizen-led Seattle Transit Advisory Board would continue to serve as the public oversight committee charged with advising on spending of the STBD funds.

Table 1. Comparison of Annual STBD Spending Levels by Category

	Average 2019/2020 Spending	Average 2021-2026 Spending
	(Expiring STBD Measure)	(Proposed STBD Measure)
Transit Service	\$55,372,000 / year	\$11,333,000 / year
Emerging Needs		\$3,333,000 / year
Mobility Access - Youth ORCA	\$3,299,000 / year	\$4,083,000 / year
Mobility Access - Low Income Access	\$1,712,000 / year	\$3,000,000 / year
Transit Infrastructure	\$2,886,000 / year	\$5,833,000 / year
Administration	\$89,000 / year	\$80,000 / year
Average Annual Spending	\$63,358,000/ year <sup>6</sup>	\$27,662,000 / year

The proposed level of spending is roughly equivalent to 80,000 annual service hours (when combining the Transit Service and Emerging Needs categories). For comparison, the STBD

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> SDOT is expending available STBD fund balance and Federal CARES grant funding in 2019 and 2020 to sustain these funding levels. Actual STBD revenue was \$56.2 million in 2019, and is projected to be \$50.7 million in 2020.

purchased approximately 300,000 service hours in 2019, and will reduce service levels to approximately 150,000 annualized hours beginning in the September 2020 Metro service change. With this reduced level of funding for Transit Service, SDOT intends to focus on supporting the City's <a href="Frequent Transit Network">Frequent Transit Network</a>. The goal of the Frequent Transit Network is to provide all-day 15-minute service on a core network serving all of Seattle. Prior to COVID-19, a significant portion of STBD spending was focused on alleviating overcrowding.

The proposed spending plan would generally maintain existing program levels for Mobility Access programs. In 2019 and 2020, the STBD budget allocated \$3.3 million/year to support 15,000 Youth ORCA passes, and \$1.8 million/year for Low Income Access programing (including the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) pilot program which provided 1,500 ORCA passes to SHA residents). SDOT is proposing a modest increase in spending for these programs.

The proposed annual spending for Transit Infrastructure represents an increase from 2019 and 2020 spending levels. In 2019, SDOT spent \$2.3 million on STBD Transit Infrastructure. As part of the 2020 budget rebalancing response to COVID-19, SDOT reduced planned 2020 spending on Transit Infrastructure from \$9.4 million to \$3.5 million.

#### **STBD Revenue Options**

In considering the proposed legislation, Council should be aware of the revenue sources available to Transportation Benefit Districts (TBDs) under state law. Under RCW <u>36.73</u>, TBDs may impose the following taxes and fees:

- <u>Sales Tax</u> With voter approval, a TBD may impose a sales tax of up to two-tenths of one percent, for up to 10 years. The proposed legislation is for a one-tenth of one percent sales tax, for six years. The STBD's sales tax authority is independent from the taxing authority of other overlapping jurisdictions, such as the King County Transportation Benefit District (KCTBD).
- <u>Tolling</u> With voter approval, a TBD may establish tolls on roads, subject to the authority of the Washington State Transportation Commission.
- <u>Property Tax Excess Levy</u> With 60 percent voter approval, a TBD may raise additional property taxes above the one percent tax limit. This is duplicative of the City's existing authority to propose excess property tax.
- <u>Developer Impact Fees</u> A TBD may establish a developer impact fee or charge for transportation improvements that are reasonably necessary as a result of the development. The City has separate authority to establish developer impact fees under the Growth Management Act (RCW <u>82.02</u>).
- <u>Local Improvement District</u> A TBD may form a local improvement district (LID) through a petition of a majority of the property owners within the proposed LID boundaries. The City has separate authority to establish LIDs, and may initiate the formation of an LID through a resolution of intent in addition to the property owner petition method.

- <u>Vehicle License Fees, Voter-Approved</u> If Initiative 976 is invalidated by the courts, a TBD could impose a vehicle license fee of up to \$100 per vehicle, with voter approval. The STBD's authority is shared with the KCTBD's authority and limits the combined vehicle license fee that may be imposed to \$100.
- Vehicle License Fees, Councilmanic If Initiative 976 is invalidated by the courts, a TBD may impose a vehicle license fee of up to \$50 per vehicle, without voter approval. The TBD may first establish up to a \$20 fee. After a \$20 fee has been in effect for two years, the TBD may raise the fee to \$40. After a \$40 fee has been in effect for two years, the TBD may raise the fee to \$50. The STBD's authority is shared with the KCTBD's authority and the combined non-voted vehicle license fee that may be imposed is \$50. The STBD instituted a \$20 councilmanic vehicle license fee in October 2010 and would continue to collect these fees if Initiative 976 is invalidated.

In addition to these STBD revenue sources, the City of Seattle could consider use of other General Fund revenue sources to substitute or provide additional funding for transit spending.

#### **Potential for Future Regional Funding Measure**

The proposed ballot measure would not constrain the KCTBD from seeking voter approval for a separate regional transit funding package in the future. A future regional proposal could include duplicative or additive service to the proposed STBD measure, and a future Council may wish to suspend collection of the STBD sales tax in deference to a successful regional vote.

If approved by voters, the STBD ballot measure would permit, but does not require, the collection of the sales tax. If a regional package were proposed during the term of the STBD measure, the STBD funding could provide backup funding in the event a regional package was not successful; or could continue to be imposed if the regional package did not fully fund the City's priorities.

#### **Considerations**

- 1. The Council may wish to consider changes to the proposed one-tenth of one percent rate of the proposed sales tax.
- 2. The Council may wish to consider changes to the proposed six-year term of the ballot measure.
- 3. The Council may wish to consider adjustments to the proposed allowed spending categories included in the ballot measure.

Central Staff is available to assist Councilmembers in developing proposed amendments to the legislation.

cc: Kirstan Arestad, Executive Director
Dan Eder, Deputy Director

## Amendment #1 to CB 119833 Councilmembers Pedersen and Herbold

Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding July 16, 2020 – V8

#### Add a new Whereas clause at the end of the recitals as follows:

\* \* \*

WHEREAS, in the meantime, King County Metro has agreed to continue partnering with The

City of Seattle in providing expanded transit service to Seattle residents through renewal

of service purchase agreements it entered with the City following passage of STBD

Proposition 1 in 2014; NOW, THEREFORE, and

WHEREAS, if Initiative 976 is overturned, the Seattle City Council and Mayor have the authority to increase the existing annual \$20 vehicle license fee to \$40 and then, after 24 months, by another \$10 to \$50; NOW, THEREFORE,

#### BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

\* \* \*

#### Revise Section 2 to reduce the spending maximum on capital improvements (item D) as follows:

Section 2. Use of revenues. The funds raised by this proposition ("Proposition 1 revenues") will be used solely for the transit and transportation purposes as described in this ordinance and associated administrative costs. Proposition 1 revenues will first be used to pay any required administrative costs to the state Department of Revenue and elections costs.

Remaining Proposition 1 revenues will be used to fund:

A. Service hours on King County Metro operated services with more than 65 percent of stops within Seattle, consistent with the Seattle Transit Master Plan and King County Metro

Transit's Service Guidelines: and

B. King County Metro transit service hours on current and future RapidRide lines serving Seattle, identified in the Seattle Transit Master Plan and King County Metro's long-range plan (Metro CONNECTS); and

C. Up to 10 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support the implementation, management, and administration of programs to support transit access by low income residents, seniors and youth, including the ORCA Opportunity program, which provides transit passes for Seattle Public Schools students in grades K-12, as well as students participating in the Seattle Promise scholarship or other similar programs at Seattle colleges and universities, along with programs targeted to seniors and public housing residents; and

D. Up to 9 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used in 2021, and up to 3 million dollars annually in the following years, to support infrastructure maintenance and capital improvements to maximize the efficiency of transit operations, including enhancements to transit speed, passenger amenities, transit street pavement maintenance, and reliability of transit service operated by King County Metro within the City of Seattle; and

E. Up to 6 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support emerging mobility needs related to COVID-19 response and recovery, and closure of the West Seattle High Bridge. Such investments could include transit service, speed and reliability improvements and Transportation Demand Management strategies described in the community-driven Reconnect West Seattle plan. The City expects these needs to require designated funding for approximately the first four years of the measure. However, Council may continue to appropriate STBD funding for these programs in 2025 and 2026 as conditions warrant. These funds may also be used throughout the six-year term to support or pilot innovative partnerships with King County Metro.

###

#### Amendment #2 to CB 119833 Councilmember Pedersen

Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding July 16, 2020 – V4

#### Add a new Whereas clauses at the end of the recitals as follows:

\* \* \*

WHEREAS, in the meantime, King County Metro has agreed to continue partnering with The

City of Seattle in providing expanded transit service to Seattle residents through renewal

of service purchase agreements it entered with the City following passage of STBD

Proposition 1 in 2014; NOW, THEREFORE, and

WHEREAS, in 2019, SDOT invested approximately \$3.4 million for first-last mile pilot

projects including \$1 million for Ride2 in West Seattle and \$2.4 million for VIA in

South Seattle; NOW, THEREFORE,

#### BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

\* \* \*

#### Revise Section 2 (item E) as follows:

Section 2. Use of revenues. The funds raised by this proposition ("Proposition 1 revenues") will be used solely for the transit and transportation purposes as described in this ordinance and associated administrative costs. Proposition 1 revenues will first be used to pay any required administrative costs to the state Department of Revenue and elections costs.

Remaining Proposition 1 revenues will be used to fund:

A. Service hours on King County Metro operated services with more than 65 percent of stops within Seattle, consistent with the Seattle Transit Master Plan and King County Metro Transit's Service Guidelines; and

B. King County Metro transit service hours on current and future RapidRide lines

serving Seattle, identified in the Seattle Transit Master Plan and King County Metro's longrange plan (Metro CONNECTS); and

C. Up to 10 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support the implementation, management, and administration of programs to support transit access by low income residents, seniors and youth, including the ORCA Opportunity program, which provides transit passes for Seattle Public Schools students in grades K-12, as well as students participating in the Seattle Promise scholarship or other similar programs at Seattle colleges and universities, along with programs targeted to seniors and public housing residents; and

D. Up to 9 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used to support infrastructure maintenance and capital improvements to maximize the efficiency of transit operations, including enhancements to transit speed, passenger amenities, transit street pavement maintenance, and reliability of transit service operated by King County Metro within the City of Seattle; and

E. Up to 6 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support emerging mobility needs related to COVID-19 response and recovery, and closure of the West Seattle High Bridge. Such investments could include transit service, speed and reliability improvements, first-last mile transit connections, and Transportation Demand Management strategies described in the community-driven Reconnect West Seattle plan. The City expects these needs to require designated funding for approximately the first four years of the measure. However, Council may continue to appropriate STBD funding for these programs in 2025 and 2026 as conditions warrant. These funds may also be used throughout the six-year term to support or pilot innovative partnerships with King County Metro.

Amendment #3 to CB 119833
Councilmembers Morales and Gonzalez

Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding July 16, 2020, v5

#### Revise Section 1 to reduce term to four-years as follows:

Section 1. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City of Seattle a proposition to authorize up to a 0.1 percent sales and use tax for a six-year four-year term ending December 31, 2026 2024. This sales and use tax replaces the \$60 Vehicle License Fee and 0.1 percent sales and use tax first authorized by Seattle voters in 2014 for a six-year term expiring at the end of 2020. If approved by voters, the revenues will be used solely for the purpose of maintaining transit service and access to frequent transit service for Seattle neighborhoods, students and low income individuals, including associated maintenance and capital improvements that serve efficient operation of transit service; emerging mobility needs to support COVID-19 recovery and the Reconnect West Seattle strategy to mitigate the ongoing closure of the West Seattle High Bridge; community-led oversight; and continuation of programs to increase transit access for low income residents, seniors and students.

###

#### Revise Section 2 to reduce term to four-years as follows:

Section 2. Use of revenues. The funds raised by this proposition ("Proposition 1 revenues") will be used solely for the transit and transportation purposes as described in this ordinance and associated administrative costs. Proposition 1 revenues will first be used to pay any required administrative costs to the state Department of Revenue and elections costs.

Remaining Proposition 1 revenues will be used to fund:

A. Service hours on King County Metro operated services with more than 65 percent of stops within Seattle, consistent with the Seattle Transit Master Plan and King County Metro Transit's Service Guidelines; and

B. King County Metro transit service hours on current and future RapidRide lines serving Seattle, identified in the Seattle Transit Master Plan and King County Metro's long-range plan (Metro CONNECTS); and

C. Up to 10 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support the implementation, management, and administration of programs to support transit access by low income residents, seniors and youth, including the ORCA Opportunity program, which provides transit passes for Seattle Public Schools students in grades K-12, as well as students participating in the Seattle Promise scholarship or other similar programs at Seattle colleges and universities, along with programs targeted to seniors and public housing residents; and

D. Up to 9 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support infrastructure maintenance and capital improvements to maximize the efficiency of transit operations, including enhancements to transit speed, passenger amenities, transit street pavement maintenance, and reliability of transit service operated by King County Metro within the City of Seattle; and

E. Up to 6 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support emerging mobility needs related to COVID-19 response and recovery, and closure of the West Seattle High Bridge. Such investments could include transit service, speed and reliability improvements and Transportation Demand Management strategies described in the community-driven Reconnect West Seattle plan. The City expects these needs to require designated funding for approximately the first four years of the measure. However, Council may continue to

appropriate STBD funding for these programs in 2025 and 2026 as conditions warrant. These funds may also be used throughout the six year four-year term to support or pilot innovative partnerships with King County Metro.

###

#### Revise Section 5 to reduce term to four-years as follows:

Section 5. Election – Ballot title. The City Council directs the City Clerk to file this ordinance with the Director of Elections of King County, Washington, as ex officio supervisor of elections, requesting the Director of Elections to call and conduct a special election in conjunction with the state general election to be held on November 3, 2020, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the City the proposition set forth in this ordinance.

The City Clerk is directed to certify to the King County Director of Elections the ballot title approved by the City Attorney in accordance with the City Attorney's responsibilities under RCW 29A.36.071 and RCW 29A.72.050. The following ballot title containing a statement of subject and concise description are submitted to the City Attorney for consideration:

CITY OF SEATTLE

PROPOSITION NO. 1

The City of Seattle's Proposition 1 concerns funding for transit and related transportation needs in Seattle.

If approved, this proposition authorizes up to a 0.1% sales and use tax expiring December 31, 2026 2024, and as proposed in Ordinance \_\_\_\_\_, to replace the current voterapproved 0.1% sales tax, expiring December 31, 2020.

Revenues are dedicated to: transit services benefitting Seattle residents, including frequent transit network maintenance and associated capital improvements; low-income fare programs for Seattle seniors, students and residents; and, for an initial period, transportation needs related to COVID-19 recovery and the West Seattle Bridge closure.

Should this proposition be approved?
Yes
No
Those in favor shall vote "Yes"; those opposed shall mark their ballots "No".
###

#### Amendment #4 to CB 119833 Councilmember Pedersen

Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding July 16, 2020 – V2

#### Add a new Section 3 to require a minimum spend on transit service as follows:

Section 3. In addition to the restrictions on the use of revenues in Section 2, the combined yearly expenditures for Section 2(A) and 2(B) shall be a majority of the yearly expenditures of Proposition 1 revenues beginning in 2022 and thereafter.

###

Renumber remaining Sections accordingly.

## Amendment #5 to CB 119833 Councilmember Herbold

Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding July 16, 2020, v1

#### Add a new Whereas clause after the 14th Whereas clause as follows:

WHEREAS, the Reconnect West Seattle strategy has a goal of shifting transit mode share in

West Seattle from 17 percent to 30 percent to manage congestion during the closure of
the West Seattle High Bridge; and

#### Revise Section 2 as follows:

Section 2. Use of revenues. The funds raised by this proposition ("Proposition 1 revenues") will be used solely for the transit and transportation purposes as described in this ordinance and associated administrative costs. Proposition 1 revenues will first be used to pay any required administrative costs to the state Department of Revenue and elections costs.

Remaining Proposition 1 revenues will be used to fund:

A. Service hours on King County Metro operated services with more than 65 percent of stops within Seattle, consistent with the Seattle Transit Master Plan and King County Metro Transit's Service Guidelines, or any King County Metro operated route serving historically low-income communities in Seattle; and

B. King County Metro transit service hours on current and future RapidRide lines serving Seattle, identified in the Seattle Transit Master Plan and King County Metro's long-range plan (Metro CONNECTS); and

C. Up to 10 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support the implementation, management, and administration of programs to support transit access by low income residents, seniors and youth, including the ORCA Opportunity program,

which provides transit passes for Seattle Public Schools students in grades K-12, as well as students participating in the Seattle Promise scholarship or other similar programs at Seattle colleges and universities, along with programs targeted to seniors and public housing residents; and

D. Up to 9 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support infrastructure maintenance and capital improvements to maximize the efficiency of transit operations, including enhancements to transit speed, passenger amenities, transit street pavement maintenance, and reliability of transit service operated by King County Metro within the City of Seattle; and

E. Up to 6 million dollars of the Proposition 1 revenues may be used annually to support emerging mobility needs related to COVID-19 response and recovery, and closure of the West Seattle High Bridge. Such investments could include transit service, speed and reliability improvements and Transportation Demand Management strategies described in the community-driven Reconnect West Seattle plan. The City expects these needs to require designated funding for approximately the first four years of the measure. However, Council may continue to appropriate STBD funding for these programs in 2025 and 2026 as conditions warrant. These funds may also be used throughout the six-year term to support or pilot innovative partnerships with King County Metro.

###

## Amendment #6A to CB 119833 Councilmember Sawant

Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding July 16, 2020 – V2

#### Add six new Whereas clauses at the end of the recitals as follows:

\* \* \*

- WHEREAS, in the meantime, King County Metro has agreed to continue partnering with The

  City of Seattle in providing expanded transit service to Seattle residents through renewal

  of service purchase agreements it entered with the City following passage of STBD

  Proposition 1 in 2014; NOW, THEREFORE, and
- WHEREAS, Sales Taxes and Vehicle License Fees are regressive taxes that disproportionately burden poor and working-class people, especially communities of color; and
- WHEREAS, public transit like Metro is an essential component of the Green New Deal, and
- WHEREAS, Developer Impact Fees could be established as early as 2021 to increase funding to

  buy bus service hours from Metro; and
- WHEREAS, Developer Impact Fees are a progressive funding source paid for by large, corporate developers; and
- WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council intends to complete in 2020 any required SEPA analysis
  to enable Developer Impact Fees to be enacted in 2021; and
- WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council is committed to enacting Developer Impact Fees in 2021

  to raise not less than \$44 million which would allow Seattle to increase funding for

  Metro bus hours; NOW, THEREFORE,

#### BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

\* \* \*

## Amendment #6B to CB 119833 Councilmembers Pedersen and Herbold

Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding July 16, 2020 - V1

#### Add a new Whereas clause at the end of the recitals as follows:

\* \* \*

WHEREAS, in the meantime, King County Metro has agreed to continue partnering with The

City of Seattle in providing expanded transit service to Seattle residents through renewal

of service purchase agreements it entered with the City following passage of STBD

Proposition 1 in 2014; NOW, THEREFORE, and

WHEREAS, in response to public requests that the City pursue progressive sources of revenue to supplement the STBD, the City Council intends to consider imposing a transportation development impact fee under RCW 36.73 or RCW 82.02, which could fund necessary capital and other transportation investments that support transit capacity; NOW, THEREFORE,

#### BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

\* \* \*

## Amendment #7 to CB 119833 Councilmembers Morales and Pedersen

Select Committee on Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding July 16, 2020 – V2

#### Add a new Whereas clause at the end of the recitals as follows:

\* \* \*

WHEREAS, in the meantime, King County Metro has agreed to continue partnering with The

City of Seattle in providing expanded transit service to Seattle residents through renewal

of service purchase agreements it entered with the City following passage of STBD

Proposition 1 in 2014; NOW, THEREFORE, and

WHEREAS, SDOT intends to conduct a Race and Social Justice analysis to inform the City

Council in consideration of future STBD spending decisions in the City's annual budget

process to focus on the needs of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and benefit

these and other historically underserved communities, including low-income households,

people with disabilities and other priority populations identified in SDOT's

Transportation Equity program; NOW, THEREFORE,

#### BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

\* \* \*