



CITY OF KIRKLAND

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MEMORANDUM

To: David Ramsay, City Manager

From: Tracy Burrows, Senior Management Analyst

Date: May 8, 2006

Subject: Presentation on "Transit Now" Initiative

At the May 16th City Council meeting, a representative from the King County Department of Transportation will be giving a presentation on County Executive Sims' "Transit Now" initiative for increased bus service to be funded by a sales tax increase. The measure is proposed for the November 2006 ballot.

"Transit Now" is a new four-point initiative that will increase King County Metro Transit service to provide up to 21 million more annual rides within ten years. It will result in an overall increase of bus service by up to 20 percent systemwide.

The "Transit Now" Initiative includes the following improvements:

RapidRide—A "bus rapid transit" (BRT) with frequent all-day service and faster travel times on five key travel corridors: three in Seattle; one connecting Bellevue and Redmond; and one serving SeaTac, Des Moines and Federal Way.

Improvements to current service—Enhancements to 35 major Metro routes with the highest ridership to provide more frequent two-way, all-day service between key cities and neighborhoods.

New service for growing areas—Development of new peak and midday service for residential areas in East and South King County.

Service partnerships—Set aside of resources for partnerships with major employers and cities, potentially leveraging additional funding from other sources to add new service in rapidly expanding employment centers.

The initiative will be funded by a one-tenth of one percent sales tax measure to be approved by voters in King County. When all sales taxes are combined, people in the county's urban areas now pay \$8.80 on most purchases of \$100, which would rise to \$8.90 if the plan were to pass. The sales tax increase amounts to an estimated \$50 million in annual revenues for Metro. If approved by the voters, the initiative would cost the average household in King County approximately \$25 more a year in sales tax.