

EASTSIDE TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION

"Dedicated to improving our quality of life and the environment by reducing congestion thru increased mobility"

My name is Jim Horn, Chairman of the Eastside Transportation Association.

The City of Seattle dominates our regions transit trips today!

15% of person trips are within Seattle – 67% of our transit trips

9% of our trips are Seattle to suburbs – 19% of our transit trips

76% of our trips are Suburb to suburb – 14% of our transit trips

LR concentrates on that very narrow 9% market share – a market already well served by buses.

Spending more money trying for a deeper penetration of this very narrow market already served by busses makes little sense.

The result is more taxpayer money spent to provide a bus-rider a train ride at more taxpayer expense with few new transit riders.

A better approach is to provide more bus service for the 76% of the population that doesn't want to go to Seattle – provides more transit riders for less cost at an earlier time. We can't afford to wait 10 to 15 years for LR.

It makes no sense to bring LR across I-90 to the eastside. All that cost to replace one bus route with little increase in ridership at huge taxpayer expense.

LR across I-90 is a very high-risk program!

Weight problems – stresses the bridge to 98% of its capacity

Stray current problems – subjecting the bridge to an earlier failure and increased maintenance costs

Attachment problems – higher cost & increased failure risks

Transition problems – LR from terra firma to a floating structure has never been done before in the world

Legal problems – vacating center roadway for LR

And no EIS. Completion of an EIS should precede the vote

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LR across I-90 increases congestion and reduces usage.

Reduces vehicles by 33%, trucks by 33%, and total passengers using the corridor by 20%.

All this to replace one bus route with LR?

No private company would undergo a program with such huge risks – particularly when there is a better way with little risk, increased benefits, lower costs and an earlier delivery.

In addition busses are more flexible to adjust to errors in forecasting population growth.

Your proposal is not a reduced program – the taxes are the same – ½¢ sales tax in Prop 1, ½¢ sales tax in your proposed program.

The only thing reduced is the amount of infrastructure that you promise to deliver for the same amount of tax.

You can't fool the public by calling it a reduced program when the taxes are the same.

KC Executive Ron Sims has it right – this is the wrong investment at the wrong time.

Comments to the Sound Transit Board on July 24, 2008

My name is Dick Paylor and I'm here as the Chair-Elect of ETA, an all volunteer organization of transportation engineers and private citizens. We receive no public money to support our activities and despite what you read in the paper and the blogs – we are not and have never been anti-transit. We support smart investments in transit and our entire transportation system in the region that will bring improvements in our environment, increased efficiency, productivity and quality of life for ALL users of the transportation system.

Since we are the Eastside Transportation Association we primarily focus on the issues that impact businesses and individual taxpayers across the Eastside and up and down the 405 corridor into Snohomish County and South King County.

To quote King County Executive Ron Sims, the proposed plan you will vote on today is “the wrong plan at the wrong time”, in particular, for the East King subarea. Your plan for EKC simply replaces existing, very successful bus routes with a multi-billion dollar rail plan that offers no new transit alternatives to existing transit riders. Worse yet, you will make travel times for all users of the I-90 bridge worse than it is today.

In 2002 the Sound Transit board, along with some 27 cities and agencies approved the 405 improvement plan that included a substantial investment in a BRT plan for this corridor. That plan also included the addition of some 1700 vanpools. The approved 405 package of projects were selected because they were proven to be the most cost-efficient, environmentally friendly way of reducing congestion in this corridor. Yet with the proposed ST2 plan you have now chosen to ignore these plans that received 100% approval from all those at the table representing the taxpayers – including this board. With this decision you have once again demonstrated to the taxpayers that you can't be trusted to do what you say.

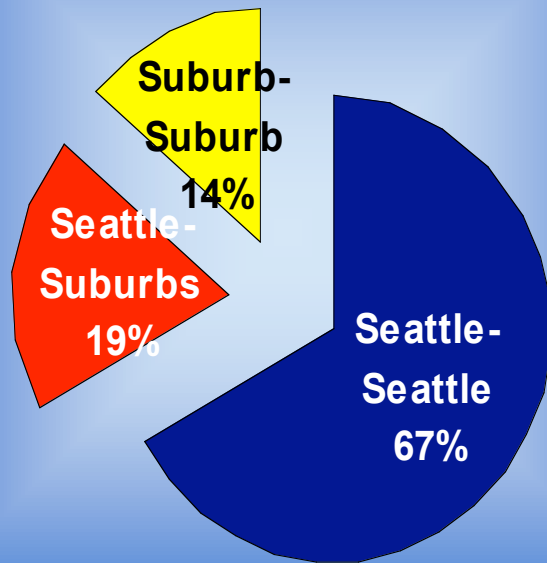
A year ago when you took your first run at grabbing more taxpayer dollars you said the EIS for this plan couldn't be completed until 2008. Again, you haven't completed this study so the taxpayers can know what the environmental impacts will be from this plan. No private project could ever gain approval without such a study. Recently, your Communications Director, Ric Ilgenfritz, was quoted as saying ST couldn't address all the very serious questions about stray electrical current and other safety issues on the I-90 bridge until the taxpayers agreed to give you ALL the money for the ST2 plan. Again, could you imagine asking a bank to provide all the money for a project before you can say how you will construct it or what it will cost?

Today I'm providing copies to the board of a 2003 Vanpool Market Study completed by WSDOT and all of the county transit agencies. On page 4 of this study it indicates that our region COULD have 19,500 vanpools carrying an average of 8.55 passengers per van for a total of 167,000 riders. This compares to 163,000 additional riders for the combination of LRT, Express busses and commuter rail that your plan says will be generated by the ST2 investment by 2030. What's the difference? The difference is

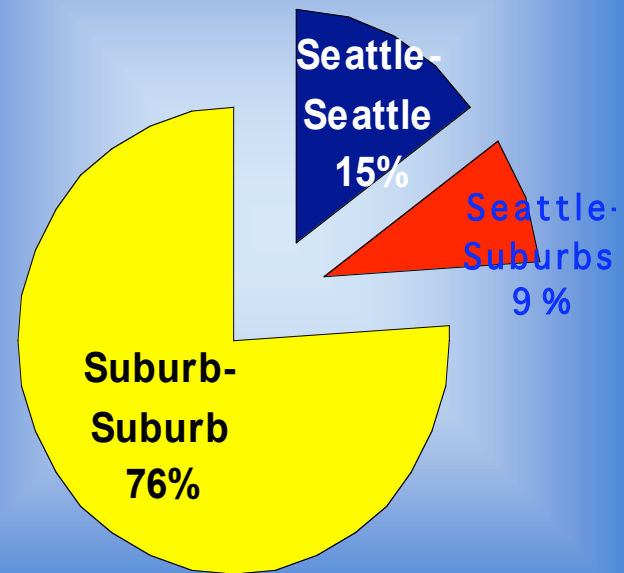
Billions of dollars that could be saved by taxpayers or invested in other transportation improvements.

City of Seattle Dominates Transit Trips

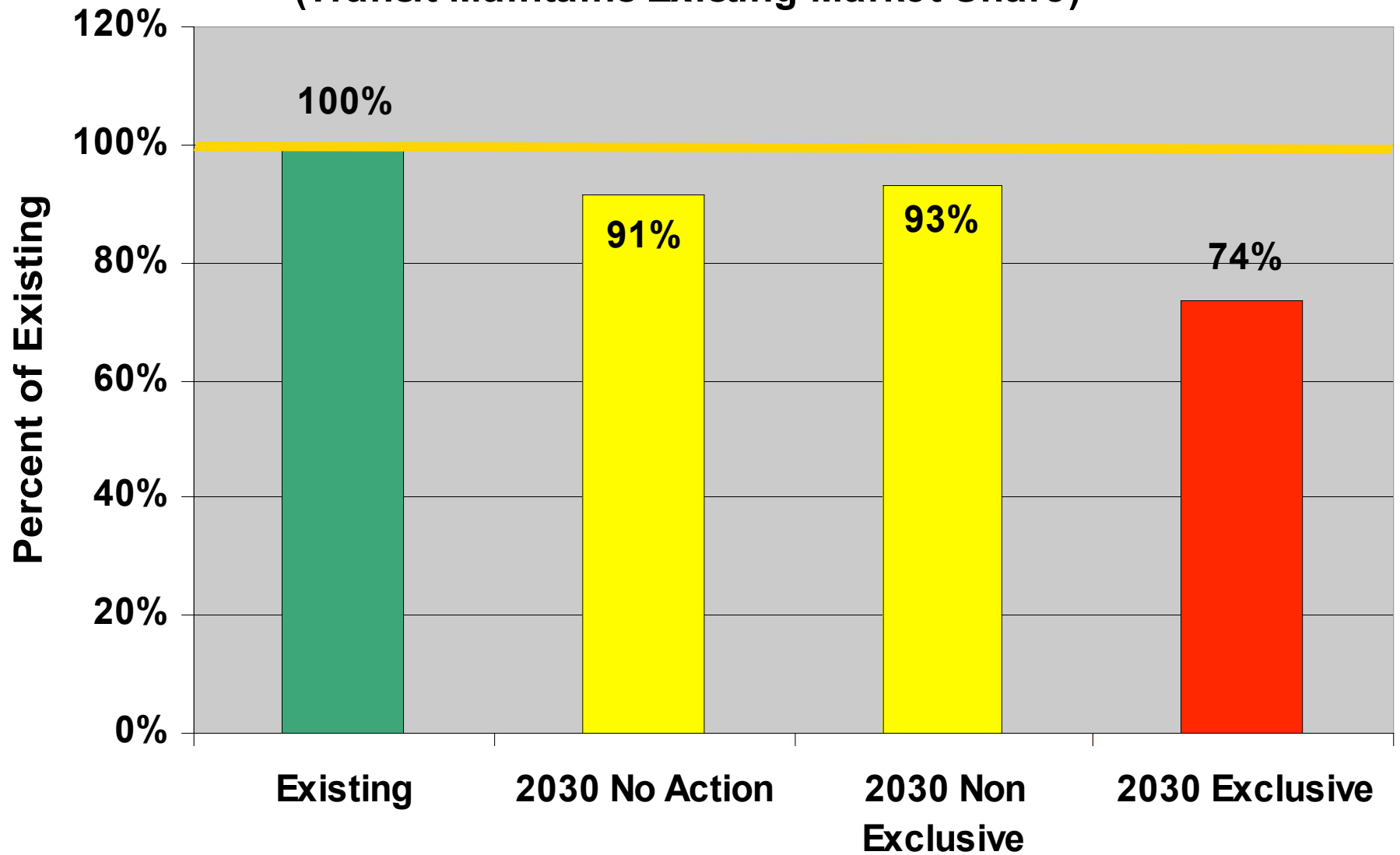
2020 Transit Trips



2020 All Person-Trips



Change in Person Through-Put, AM Peak Hour Westbound at East Channel Bridge (Transit Maintains Existing Market Share)



Source: TDA Inc., using Vehicle Through-put from I-90 Center Roadway Study, WSDOT, July, 06,