

**Seattle Transit Blog
Questionnaire 2011
Seattle Councilmember Bruce Harrell**

1. Do you support Proposition 1, the additional \$60 vehicle license fee for transportation?

Yes. My support for Proposition 1 has been demonstrated by my participation and affirmative vote at every meeting held by the Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD); my affirmative vote and advocacy as a Seattle City Councilmember to create and support the STBD; my participation in approximately 20 ancillary meetings with SDOT representatives, Council Central Staff, City Council Staff, Transit advocates and community members to discuss the vehicle license fee; and my active fundraising efforts, telephone soliciting and community advocacy of Proposition 1. While some people may simply write about how they support a VLF or some form of it and boast about their transit values, I am actually demonstrating my values with hard work, commitment and my most valuable resource: my time. Even today (October 14, 2011), I made several calls to raise money to promote Proposition 1. Groups such as the Washington Conservation Voters and the Cascade Bicycle Club have endorsed my candidacy because of my strong commitment to smart transportation solutions such as enhanced transit.

2. The breakdown of the \$200m in VLF revenue is 29% for road maintenance and safety, 49% for transit speed, reliability, and access improvements, and 22% for freight, bicycles, and pedestrians. The Council will have a lot of influence on how this evolves. Does this strike you as about right? If not, why?

About right; the 29/49/22 ratio was the result of intense negotiations and discussions from the Citizen Transportation Advisory Committee III, co-chaired by Kate Joncas and Ref Lindmark and comprised of transit advocates, light rail advocates, bike and pedestrian advocates and community members committed to improving our transportation system. This diverse committee of transportation advocates considered many factors relative to their recommendations including: Seattle's future as a city that will continue to rely heavily on transit; Seattle's backlog of transportation maintenance needs; and our commitment to multi-modes of transportation such as light rail, bus rapid transit, street car alignments and bike/pedestrian needs.

I am pleased that nearly 50% of the funds are devoted to transit speed, reliability and access improvements because that is what the voters want: better transit. Moreover, because I support the process used to establish the ratios in the final package, it is my duty as an elected leader to support the ratios we have proposed to the voters; not to contradict or criticize it. My goal is to get it passed and I have advocated for what was put on the ballot. It would be counterproductive and ineffective to set forth a ballot measure, and then argue that the ratios are incorrect. If any potential councilmember takes a position inconsistent with what he or she voted to put on the ballot, then they would be ignoring the process used to achieve the ratios and perpetuate the criticisms that may affect the likelihood of the VLF passing. Now is the time to increase transit hours, transit service and transit quality through advocacy, hard work and service; not by grandstanding or simply engaging in contrarian negativity as a means to gain attention. The

package we proposed is about right and the voters should recognize that the package was approved after many factors were considered.

3. Of the \$100m transit budget, about 40% will go to bus speed and reliability improvements in some of the 15 priority corridors; 18% to engineering and matching funds for streetcar projects; 20% for more trolleybus wire; and 22% to improve access to transit lines. Does this strike you as about right? If not, why?

The percentages described above are about right. It should be noted that these ratios are not arbitrary, but based on an evaluation of Seattle's capital needs, future needs assessment, and the policies set forth in Seattle's Comprehensive Plan. Our Comprehensive Plan considers anticipated population growth and increased density around light rail stations as well as high transit corridors. It should also be noted that Seattle is in the process of re-defining itself as a city—attempting to use transit, light rail and its streetcar system as a means to create livable and walk-able communities; communities that are environmentally sustainable as well as safe and enjoyable. Our trolley car system, for example, was originally designed in a different era and now we are viewing our transportation systems as being an integrated part of a complete neighborhood; not a method of simply getting from one neighborhood to another. Because of this, it will be imperative to have diverse investments in many areas. This strategy acknowledges that all areas in Seattle are not equal in terms of infrastructure needs or anticipated growth levels. The ratios described above take these policy considerations into account.

4. Under what conditions would you vote to send the remaining \$20 of authority to the ballot?

Assuming the \$60 VLF passes and we have demonstrated to the public that they are better served by these investments and that the funds are being invested efficiently, I will be prepared to support putting the remaining \$20 of authority on the ballot. This could happen as early as 2012 or 2013, but it is always prudent to also consider what other measures are placed on the ballot. If the city does their part by agreeing to invest, Seattle must first do its part to prove that we are making the investments wisely before we go back to the voters for additional approval. This will be the work I will do during my second term. I have already demonstrated to the public that, as a policy leader for Seattle City Light, I am extremely competent at driving organizational efficiencies and measuring the outcomes of investments. As a former attorney adept at creating high performance organizations, my analysis and support of our transportation investments will help to make the case.

5. Do you support the city's recent efforts to adjust public parking rates to demand?

Yes, demand should be a factor used to evaluate parking rates, but certainly not the only factor. We have studied the policies, best practices and technology used in other cities to develop public parking rates and I have concluded that a system that uses demand as a lever makes sense. For example, there is overwhelming data to suggest that drivers want access/availability to parking

spaces. A recent survey of Seattle data suggested that where we lowered rates in certain business districts, the demand did not significantly increase. What we have surmised from this fact is that rates may be an attractor to drivers looking for parking, but in and of itself, it is not the only factor. I also support technology used to achieve variable rates and technology that allows drivers to pre-load and pre-pay meters from smart phones or computers. As we consider parking rates, we should also consider other issues and policies that help promote smart parking policies.

Statewide Transportation

1. Is there anything about the SR520 bridge project that has to change for you to vote to approve it?

The process to arrive at a potential Preferred Alternative was certainly not perfect, but clearly one that demonstrated an intense effort after 14 years. Of course several challenges remain relative to the SR 520 bridge project, among them being the need to identify \$2 billion dollars in capital funds needed to complete the west link. Because there is an active lawsuit challenging many of the design elements and the process used to endorse a Preferred Alternative, as an elected official for the City of Seattle, I will refrain from creating a record that opines on specific design elements or the “adequacy” of the review process. I have been very active in discussions to address the pending concerns relative to whether a reduction of lanes west of the Montlake cut will create a jamming effect; whether the traffic impacts on the Montlake residential community have been fully vetted and whether the appropriate mitigation impacts have been studied; and whether the final plan will clearly and adequately accommodate light rail in the future. During my second term, I will make sure that we have a SR 520 project that moves people and goods safely; that accommodates light rail and BRT, and establishes optimum connectivity with transit and pedestrians at the west link.

2. What new revenue sources would you like to see the state allocate to transit above and beyond the current authority? Check all that apply.

- I don't think we need new taxes for transit.
- I don't care what the state picks; we just need the revenue.
- Motor Vehicle Excise Tax
- Income Tax
- Tolls
- Repeal the sales tax exemption on gasoline
- Repeal other sales tax exemptions
- Higher Sales Tax Rates
- Property Tax
- Vehicle License Fee

3. Cities have begun to launch “road diets”, in which four-lane arterials are converted into two lane roads with a center turn lane and bike lanes. Supporters claim this improves

bicycle safety, pedestrian safety, and traffic flow by taking left turns out of traffic. Opponents claim this increases congestion. Broadly speaking, do you support or oppose these projects?

I support the use of “road diets” when and where they make sense and where they do not create unnecessary vehicle congestion or expose bicycle riders and pedestrians to unnecessary safety risks. The needless deaths of bicycle riders in Seattle are unacceptable. We are currently working on a Neighborhood Greenway concept that will examine what non-arterial streets can be used to improve and segregate bicycle paths. This concept, one in which I will support fully, should prove to be very promising and has been effective in other cities.

4. Should the state toll I-90 to balance demand and raise additional revenue?

Possibly, but before I-90 is tolled as a means to offset other highway projects, the state must first evaluate the impacts of diversion to I-90 from the SR 520 project and address the legal challenges associated with tolling I-90 if no direct investments or improvements can be established through a tolling system.

5. Do you support Tim Eyman’s I-1125?

No.

Land Use

1. What principles are most important in determining what density limits should apply to a neighborhood?

My support of smart density considers several factors, among them are the questions: Is the desired density consistent with Seattle’s Comprehensive Plan and associated Neighborhood plans? Is the receiving neighborhood part of our urban strategies and part of a Hub Urban Village or Residential Urban Village? Is the receiving neighborhood expected to also receive public amenities such as open space, green space, access to fresh produce, good schools and public safety, in other words, can density be achieved without losing those characteristics that make a neighborhood great? Has the public had an adequate and meaningful opportunity to participate in and help achieve the type of density that is sought? Do the city’s final plans actually reflect the values and issues raised in the foregoing questions?

2. Are zoning decisions best made at the city level, as they are currently made?

Yes, but all zoning decisions should be made in the context of King County’s Growth Management Plan and Washington State’s Growth Management Act. Seattle’s zoning decisions should be made locally but always with a lens of concern for our county and state needs.

3. Are transit priority treatments for buses (signal priority, queue jumps, bus lanes) a worthwhile expenditure of tax dollars?

Yes. As an active member of the Puget Sound Regional Council's Transportation Policy Board and the Puget Sound Regional Council's Executive Board, I have been a strong advocate for transit priority treatment for buses. Additionally, in evaluating what projects should receive federal STP and CMAQ funds, I have consistently advocated and secured funding for these types of projects.

King County Metro

1. Do you support the \$20 Congestion Reduction Charge?

Yes.

2. Do you support the new Metro service allocation guidelines, which place less emphasis on geographic equity and more on route productivity?

Yes. While the original 40/40/20 rule was implemented to achieve parity in service hours per capita between subareas, it either created unintended results or became outdated. Years ago, it was understandable that there should be a true-up between East and West subareas relative to the level of transit service or higher baseline that Seattle achieved. However, the new service guidelines, which consider factors such as King County's changing demographics, external factors such as climate change, transportation system pricing and transit/construction mitigation, all present a more comprehensive approach for allocation.

3. If the legislature doesn't grant more authority, would you rather raise fares or cut service?

Given the confines of these two options, neither of which I believe are acceptable, I would have to raise fares. Then, as I have done as a Seattle City Councilmember, I would develop legislation that recognizes the regressive effect of higher fares and create a method to better serve those who cannot afford higher fares.

4. What other administrative reforms would you like to see Metro undertake?

I am proud to have received the endorsements of King County Executive Dow Constantine, as well as King County Councilmembers Larry Gossett, Larry Phillips, Bob Ferguson and Joe McDermott. I have worked with them to advocate for other administrative reforms including the development of a universal rider fare-card for light rail, transit and Seattle's street car; the re-establishment of a ride-free zone in Downtown Seattle; the use of better camera technology on

buses to improve public safety; the improved use of technology to provide smart phones and computers real-time updates on bus schedules; the use of technology to provide better updates during snowstorm disasters and service interruptions; better planning for east-west transit corridors in many parts of Seattle; and better planning for connectivity to light rail and the anticipated alignment of two street car lines.

Sound Transit

1. Which statement do you agree with more:

- Sound Transit must prioritize satisfying local governments and neighborhoods.
 Sound Transit must be extremely conservative about approving increases in scope.

2. Which should be a higher priority for Sound Transit in an era of austerity:

- Maintaining the scope of signature light rail projects
 Preserving smaller capital projects and bus services that spread Sound Transit's benefits over a wider area

3. What administrative reforms would you like to see Sound Transit undertake?

Sound Transit should be a model for transparency and openness. I would like to see its Governing Board and employees do a better job of publishing its operations and maintenance costs; its ridership numbers; its ridership projections and all of the data and policy considerations that form the basis for its planning and operations. Because of the importance of light rail, I would also like to see it play a major leadership role in making sure the various transportation bodies (WSDOT, SDOT, King County, etc.) coordinate their efforts to find regional solutions moving forward.

4. Under what circumstances would you support additional funding authority from the legislature for Sound Transit with size and scope of Sound Transit 2?

I am eager to do so, using the lessons we learned from Sound Transit 2. As an elected leader in 2008, I spent a great deal of time examining why the joint ballot measure in 2007 failed. That measure would have greatly improved mass transit and entailed nearly 50 miles of new light rail lines, two additional Sounder stations and a streetcar line that connected the International District, First Hill and Capitol Hill. It also included expansion studies for rapid transit across SR 520. But it failed. The \$17.8 billion package that passed in 2008 demonstrated to us that voters believe in light rail, approving over 36 new miles of two-way light rail track and a First Hill streetcar connector, but again, we have to demonstrate to them that we will make investments efficiently, monitor capital cost overruns, and coordinate connections with local transit organizations. If we establish this accountability to the public, then we should be well positioned to request and receive additional funding authority.