



Associated Students of Western Washington University

AS Board of Directors

Local Legislative Update: 8.10.10

Monday August 9th, the Bellingham Board of Transportation District No. 1 (the board consists of the city council) adopted a resolution to include a proposition for a sales tax increase on the ballot in November. The sales tax revenue will be used to fund transportation improvements, possibly including bus service. The approved resolution identified three projects chosen from the City's Transportation Improvement Program which was adopted June 21st2010. Below are the three whereas clauses in the resolution that briefly lay out where the funds for the tax increase would be directed towards:

WHEREAS, Project #1, Annual Arterial Pavement Resurfacing is a transportation improvement project of significance to the City; resurfacing of arterial streets on an ongoing basis will optimize the lifecycle of the City's existing infrastructure. Given the reduction in the current funding level available for street resurfacing projects, there is a need for the additional revenue source provided by this voter approved sales and use tax to maintain the City's infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, Project #16 Non-Motorized Transportation Options responds to an important goal in the City's Comprehensive Plan, to facilitate a mode shift to more non-motorized transportation facilities, and this voter approved sales and use will provide needed funding for alternate infrastructure like sidewalk connections, flashing crosswalks, and bike facilities, and

WHEREAS, Project #17 "Transit Enhancement Projects" has been identified as a public transportation project intended to be funded by imposition of the sales and use tax; and

The very last whereas clause of the resolution allows for the Board (City Council) to reduce the imposed tax level in the case of a WTA county wide tax proposition, it reads as follows:

WHEREAS, in the event a future Whatcom Transit Authority ballot measure is approved by voters, the Board intends to consider imposing less than the authorized two tenths of one percent (0.002) of the sales and use tax approved by voters in this ballot measure; and

Below is the proposed ballot language for the November election:

The Board of Transportation Benefit District No. 1, Bellingham, Washington, adopted Resolution No. 2010-07-040 concerning a sales and use tax to fund transportation improvements. This proposition would authorize a sales and use tax of ~~two-tenths of~~ up to two tenths of one percent ~~one percent~~ (0.0022%) to be collected from all taxable retail sales within the District in accordance with RCW 82.14.0455 for a term of ten years for the purpose of paying or financing costs of the following transportation improvement projects identified in the City of Bellingham Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): resurfacing pavement on arterial streets and bicycle lanes, adding non-motorized transportation options and transit service. Should this proposition be approved?