

October 27, 2003

CITY OF SHORELINE
SHORELINE CITY COUNCIL
SUMMARY MINUTES OF DINNER MEETING

Monday, October 27, 2003
6:00 p.m.

Shoreline Conference Center
Highlander Room

PRESENT: Mayor Jepsen, Councilmembers Chang, Gustafson, Hansen, and Ransom

ABSENT: Deputy Mayor Grossman and Councilmember Montgomery

STAFF: Steve Burkett, City Manager; Robert Olander, Deputy City Manager; Julie Modrzejewski, Assistant and City Manager; Joyce Nichols, Communications and Intergovernmental Relations Director; and Paul Haines, Public Works Director

GUESTS: King County Councilmembers Carolyn Edmonds and Dwight Pelz

Mayor Jepsen convened the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Steve Burkett, City Manager, introduced King County Councilmembers Carolyn Edmonds and Dwight Pelz, noting they had come to discuss the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID). Councilmember Pelz is a member of the Executive Committee of the RTID.

Councilmember Pelz provided some background on the RTID, which was created two years ago by the state legislature to support highway and transit investments. Legislators decided to set up the district on a tri-county model. Councilmember Pelz did not support this approach because he believes the problem is much greater in King County than in Pierce and Snohomish Counties. The bill, written primarily by Senators Dan McDonald and Jim Horn, focuses on adding capacity and allows a half-cent increase in sales tax to fund RTID. Although the sales tax has never been used to pay for roads, it has been used to fund transit. However, RTID supports primarily adding capacity via roads, not transit.

Continuing, Councilmember Pelz stated that it is impossible to build our way out of the gridlock on our roads today. He said the projection is that if more lanes were added to SR 520, it would triple the commute time because people would be "sitting in a parking lot" trying to get on to I-5 from SR 520. He emphasized the importance of discussing what can be done to help solve some of these transportation problems, noting he is a proponent of a mix of solutions, not just more roads.

Councilmember Pelz continued, explaining that light rail is moving ahead with its line from Downtown Seattle to near the airport, with a groundbreaking coming up soon. He supports bringing light rail to Northgate and then north to Shoreline. He said the first

October 27, 2003

segment of the light rail will only serve Beacon Hill, Downtown Seattle and the South End. He pointed out that most parts of Seattle will not be served by this line.

Councilmember Pelz expressed the view that RTID can be successful if a compromise can be forged on the balance of projects. Until a compromise on the roads/rail projects is reached, he believes everyone is poorly served by worrying about what projects are on the RTID list. Once it is known how much money is in the RTID, then projects will be evaluated. That said, Councilmember Pelz believed the \$60 million that Shoreline is requesting for Highway 99 bus rapid transit and construction is appropriate and should be included under any one of several RTID scenarios.

Mayor Jepsen asked if light rail will go to the airport, to which Councilmember Pelz responded that the rail will connect near the airport to a shuttle that will run to the airport terminals.

Mayor Jepsen then asked about the timing of bringing the RTID to the voters. Councilmember Pelz responded that a ballot measure may appear within the next fourteen months. The legislature must make some changes to the bill authorizing RTID, which he said could occur in 2005.

Mr. Burkett asked whether the vote on the RTID would be followed by a vote on Phase II of Sound Transit in a few years, to which Councilmember Pelz responded that because Sound Transit's districts do not match up with those of RTID, it is unlikely that this scenario would play out.

Responding to Councilmember Hansen's question about whether the monorail and light rail compete with each other, Councilmember Pelz said he is not a supporter of the monorail. He believes it will not be complimentary and that the monorail has had and will continue to have problems, and that there is no reason to have two agencies, two maintenance yards, etc. doing nearly the same thing.

Councilmember Hansen asked if the light rail will be grade separated and Councilmember Pelz responded that a third of it will be in a tunnel, a third at grade, and a third elevated. The light rail system is scheduled to open in August of 2009. He believes it will be very positive and that communities will want light rail.

Councilmember Edmonds added that many of the road projects on the RTID list are on state highways and that the state should be paying for those. The RTID bill does not address that problem.

Councilmember Pelz explained that the State's position is that the RTID should pay for the viaduct and SR-520, which are state highways. He felt King County should not let the legislature require the Puget Sound region to pay for its own roads with sales tax from local residents while the Puget Sound region's gas tax dollars are being sent to other parts of the state to pay for roads. He said the County "will need to hold the State's feet to the fire on this issue."

October 27, 2003

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Mayor Jepsen thanked the King County Councilmembers for coming to Shoreline and providing this briefing and declared the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Joyce Nichols, Communications and Intergovernmental Relations Director

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