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Bellevue Downtown Association Endorses Regional Roads & Transit Plan

BELLEVUE, WA (June 19, 2007) – Citing the pressing need to make substantial long-term investments in the region’s transportation system, the Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA) Board of Directors today voted with an approximate 80 percent majority to support the Roads & Transit package as it moves toward a regional vote in November.

“The Roads & Transit plan offers a multi-modal approach to addressing decades of underinvestment in mobility solutions for our workforce, residents and visitors,” said Warren Koons, 2007 BDA Chair and partner with law firm Davis Wright Tremaine LLP. “It provides a set of critical road infrastructure improvements and will connect Bellevue to Seattle and points east by light rail in support of the vision we share for a strong, viable, livable and accessible Downtown Bellevue.”

The Roads & Transit package will build both on recent capacity and safety investments in regional highways and Sound Transit’s Sound Move plan. These new investments would add lane capacity to I-405 between I-90 and Renton and through Downtown Bellevue, complete the new interchange at NE 10th Street in Downtown Bellevue, replace the SR-520 floating bridge, and connect Downtown Bellevue to the region’s high capacity transit system.

“Downtown Bellevue is evolving and growing at a rapid clip,” added BDA President Leslie Lloyd. “The Board feels the time is now to improve our regional highways and transit system and sustain our thriving city as an attractive, competitive cultural and economic center for the region. With this action, the Board acknowledges its role to provide leadership behind such a significant issue for Downtown Bellevue.”

Over the past six months, the BDA Board received and evaluated extensive input on the package from both supporters and critics. On June 14, the BDA hosted a moderated dialogue on the Roads & Transit package for its membership with panelists Reagan Dunn (King County Council Member/RTID Executive Board Member), Aaron Reardon, (Snohomish County Executive/Sound Transit Board Member), Kemper Freeman, Jr. (Kemper Development Company Chair/CEO) and Dick Paylor (Eastside Transportation Association Chair-Elect).

“The Bellevue Downtown Association will continue working with its membership, the leadership and staff at RTID, Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue, as well as other community and neighborhood leaders and organizations, to ensure the package of investments delivers maximum value to our community,” said Koons.

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He added, “We respect and share concerns about the costs, timing and impacts of the proposed light rail line through Downtown and Bellevue neighborhoods. Therefore, if the package is approved by the voters, the BDA will work diligently to understand the details brought forward in the environmental study and advocate for the best outcomes in our community, including that the rail line be properly located and configured to provide Bellevue with the optimal benefits and least adverse impacts.”

Established in 1974, the Bellevue Downtown Association (www.bellevuedowntown.com) is a nonprofit, membership organization charged with leading the continuing evolution of Downtown Bellevue as the economic and cultural heart of the Eastside. The BDA advocates for a shared vision of Downtown Bellevue, cultivates economic vitality, fosters a dynamic civic and cultural community and creates an open forum for Downtown constituents.

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