RESOLUTION NO. 856-26

A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE SUBMISSION TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE SPOKANE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT AREA AT THE PRIMARY ELECTION TO BE HELD ON AUGUST 4, 2026, OF A PROPOSITION REAUTHORIZING SPOKANE TRANSIT AUTHORITY TO COLLECT UP TO 2/10 OF 1% SALES TAX, FIRST AUTHORIZED BY VOTERS IN 2016, FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE REGION; AND OTHER MATTERS PROPERLY RELATED THERETO.

SPOKANE TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Spokane County, Washington

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SPOKANE TRANSIT AUTHORITY as follows:

WHEREAS, the Spokane Transit Authority (STA) is a municipal corporation operating and existing under and pursuant to the Constitution and Laws of the State of Washington, including RCW Title 36, Chapter 57A, Public Transportation Benefit Area; and,

WHEREAS, in prior elections, most recently on November 8, 2016, voters approved local funding with the purpose of providing quality and cost-effective public service and funding public transportation serving Spokane's transportation benefit area, and to implement the projects and purposes of a strategic planned known as *STA Moving Forward*;

WHEREAS, the local funding approved by voters in 2016 has been utilized to implement a significant increase in transit service, fulfilling the planned investments identified in the *STA Moving Forward* plan as amended, and other services, programs and activities generally consistent with Connect Spokane, STA's Comprehensive Plans;

WHEREAS, as a result of implementation of the *STA Moving Forward* plan, STA now provides more bus service than ever in its history, connecting people to more jobs and services, delivering bus rapid transit service on other high performance transit corridors, expanding the quality and frequency of service, extending paratransit service to new areas, and supporting an effective rideshare program;

WHEREAS, the Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) Metropolitan Transportation Plan: Horizon 2050, referencing the Washington State Office of Financial Management population forecasts, anticipates that Spokane County will grow by nearly 120,000 persons by the year 2050, with employment expected to grow at a higher rate, with regional activity centers, such as the West Plains/Spokane Airport, Fairchild Air Force Base, Northeast Spokane, and Spokane's Central Business District playing a central role in travel patterns;

WHEREAS, Spokane County is expected to complete the North Spokane Corridor in 2030, which will connect I-90 to US-2 and US-395, enabling the full implementation of bus rapid transit on Division Street in the near future;

WHEREAS, the local funding approved by voters in 2016 will expire on December 31, 2028, unless renewed in accordance with RCW 82.14.045;

WHEREAS, STA has developed and adopted a new strategic plan, *Connect 2035*, to maintain and enhance public transportation through 2035, seeking to advance goals to "elevate the customer experience, lead and collaborate with community partners to enhance the quality of life in our region, and strengthen our capacity to anticipate and respond to the demands of the region;"

WHEREAS, the STA Board of Directors has identified the sales and use tax as an authorized source of revenue and finds it is in the best interests and welfare of the inhabitants of STA's public transportation benefit area to sustain the general scope of STA service and infrastructure, and carry out the investments and initiatives included in the *Connect 2035* plan and further finds, after reviewing all the funding methods within its authority, it would not be possible to implement said plan without maintaining the collection of voter-approved sales and use tax;

WHEREAS, STA remains committed to its longstanding principles and policies of diligent financial management, including maintaining a no-debt financial position, rider contribution to cost of service through reasonable fares, and pursuing and leveraging both federal and state grant funding to reduce the burden on Spokane taxpayers to ensure the long-term financial stability of STA's transit system;

WHEREAS, the Board finds that citizen oversight of STA's use of sales and use tax revenues is best preserved by maintaining a time limitation (a "sunset clause") on the collection of any sales and use tax authorized herein that exceeds STA's previously voter-approved rate of six-tenths of one percent (0.6%).

WHEREAS, with voter approval, STA shall be reauthorized to collect sales and use tax of up to two-tenths of one percent, as first authorized in November 2016 (STA's existing sales tax authority), which will be used to maintain and enhance the existing transit system, including fixed-route bus, paratransit and rideshare services, and improve and expand the availability of public transportation through new modes and programs, and provide for essential transit support facilities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of STA as follows:

Section 1. Findings. The STA Board hereby finds that the best interests of the inhabitants of STA's public transportation benefit area require STA be reauthorized to collect sales and use tax through this Resolution in the amount of two-tenths of one percent (0.2%) pursuant to RCW 82.12.045 for the purpose of providing a portion of the funds necessary to finance public transportation.

It is further found that the best interests of the citizens of the Spokane region, the users of STA's public transportation system, and the economic interests of the Spokane region require the submission to the qualified electors of STA a proposition of whether STA shall be reauthorized to collect sales and use tax of up to two-tenths of one percent (0.2%) first authorized in November 2016 (STA's existing sales tax authority).

It is further found that the funding approved by the qualified electors shall be used to maintain and enhance the existing transit system, including fixed-route bus, paratransit and rideshare services, and improve and expand the availability of public transportation through new modes and programs, and provide for essential transit support facilities. Such maintenance and enhancement will be further supported by STA's longstanding commitments to diligent financial management, including maintaining a no-debt financial position, rider contribution to the cost of service through reasonable fares, and pursuing and leveraging both federal and state grant funding to reduce the burden on Spokane taxpayers to ensure the long-term financial stability of STA's transit system.

Section 2. Use of Proceeds. Upon approval of the reauthorization of the sales and use tax of two-tenths of one percent (0.2%), which voters first approved in 2016, STA intends to continue providing quality and cost-effective public transportation services (as authorized in Ch. 36.57A RCW) as part of its general comprehensive plan, and improve and expand services as part of *Connect 2035* to best serve the public transportation benefit area, as amended from time to time to meet changed conditions and requirements.

Section 3. Calling of Election. The Spokane County Auditor, as ex officio supervisor of elections in Spokane County, Washington, is requested to submit to the qualified electors of STA for approval or rejection at the primary election to be held on August 4, 2026, a proposition reauthorizing sales and use tax of up to 2/10th of 1% (0.2%) within the limitations established by RCW 82.14.045.

Upon approval of the voters of the proposition hereinafter set forth, STA may use the proceeds of such sales and use tax to fund the costs of public transportation, as more particularly described in this Resolution.

The Clerk of the Authority is hereby authorized and directed to certify a proposition to Spokane County Elections, as ex-officio supervisor of elections in Spokane County, Washington, in substantially the following form:

SPOKANE TRANSIT AUTHORITY

PROPOSITION NO. 1

MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The Spokane Transit Authority Board of Directors passed Resolution No. 856-26 concerning reauthorizing sales and use tax funding for public transportation services.

This proposition reauthorizes a voter-approved sales tax of up to 2/10th of 1% (0.2%) to provide public transportation, effective January 1, 2029 and expiring no later than December 31, 2048. Proceeds would be used to maintain and enhance the existing transit system, improve and expand public transportation through new modes and programs, and provide for essential transit support facilities. This tax, approved in 2016, is set to expire on December 31, 2028, unless renewed.

Should this proposition be approved?

YES ______

NO ______

For purposes of receiving notice of the exact language of the ballot proposition required by RCW 29A.36.080, the STA Board of Directors hereby designates: (a) the Clerk of the Authority; and (b) STA's Legal Counsel, as the individuals to whom such notice should be provided. Legal Counsel and the Clerk of the Authority are each authorized individually to approve changes to the ballot title, if any, deemed necessary by the Spokane County Auditor.

The Clerk of the Authority is authorized to make necessary clerical corrections to this ordinance including, but not limited to, the correction of scrivener's or clerical errors, references, numbering, section/subsection numbers, and any reference thereto.

The proper STA officials are authorized to perform such duties as are necessary or required by law to submit the question of whether the collection of the 0.2% of sales and use tax shall be approved, as provided in this Resolution, to the electors at the August 4, 2026, primary election.

Section 4. Local Voters' Pamphlet Authorized. The preparation and distribution of a local voters' pamphlet providing information on the foregoing ballot measure is hereby authorized. The pamphlet shall include an explanatory statement and arguments advocating approval and disapproval of the ballot measure, if any. In accordance with RCW 29A.32.280, the arguments advocating approval and rejection of the ballot measure shall be prepared by committees appointed by STA's Board of Directors. Each committee shall be composed of not more than three persons; however, a committee may seek the advice of any person or persons.

Section 5. Effective Date. This resolution shall take effect and be in force immediately upon passage.

Section 6. Severability. In the event any one or more of the provisions of this Resolution shall for any reason be held to be invalid, such invalidity shall not affect or invalidate any other provision of this Resolution, but this Resolution shall be construed and enforced as if such invalid provision had not been contained herein; provided that any provision which shall for any reason be held to be invalid shall be deemed to be in effect to the extent permitted by law.

ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of Spokane Transit Authority at a special meeting thereof held on the 29th day of April 2026.

Attest:

Dana Infalt
Dana Infalt
Clerk of the Authority

Lance Speirs
STA Board Chair

Approved as to form:

Megan Clark
Megan Clark
Legal Counsel