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Alcohol ads on local buses? It may happen

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by David Ham



Rainier Beer ad

Kitsap Transit estimates it could make at least \$100,000 a year if it allows advertising for alcohol on its buses.

Executive Director John Clauson believes Kitsap Transit would be the first transit agency in the state to allow it if the board approves the plan next month.

He says the ads would be tasteful and would also include disclaimers for people to drink responsibly.

However not everyone agrees it would be a good first.

"The scientific research linking exposure to alcohol advertising, any alcohol advertising, with influencing underage drinking and leading to alcohol-related problems is well-documented," stated Michael Scippa, Director of Public Affairs at Alcohol Justice. "We recommend alcohol ads on public property should be banned - including buses, trains and street furniture, to reduce the threat of increasing alcohol-related harm."

Clauson says there has been little opposition in the community so far over the idea.

Right now, Kitsap Transit makes about \$47,000 a year in ads on its buses.

Although Clauson admits the added potential revenue would bring in less than 1% of the agency's operating budget, he says it is still important and adds up.

"Alcohol advertising has a destructive effect on community health and youth," Scippa added, "If necessary, governments must act by passing measures to keep alcohol advertising out of public transit systems, as Los Angeles just did in January of this year."