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November 7, 2008

520 Tolling Implementation Committee
c/o Puget Sound Regional Council
1011 Western Avenue, Suite 500
Seattle, Washington 98104-1035

Dear Members of the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee:

Of the many transportation problems facing the Puget Sound Region, one of the most serious is the continued deterioration of the SR 520 Bridge. The SeaShore Forum has closely followed your efforts to find a funding solution for the construction of a replacement bridge. It is our concern that if tolling is implemented on the bridge, traffic congestion in surrounding communities will significantly increase without proper mitigation measures.

For example, SR 522 is a critical transportation corridor for north King County residents. This route currently suffers from frequent traffic congestion, overcrowded transit service, and a demand for park-and-rides that exceeds capacity. Without proper mitigation, tolling the SR 520 Bridge will exacerbate these existing transportation problems because additional drivers will use SR 522 as they seek alternative routes to avoid paying a toll.

SeaShore recognizes the importance of tolling the Lake Washington corridor to help pay for a new SR 520 Bridge. However, it is clear that no matter which tolling approach is used, mitigation measures will need to be in place to ensure that diversion does not adversely impact nearby cities.

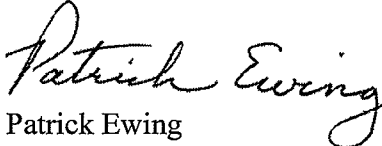
SeaShore recommends that mitigation measures include increased transit service, construction of new and improved park-and-ride facilities, and assurance that infrastructure improvements will be completed on schedule. These measures should be implemented prior to the start of a Lake Washington tolling program.

More specifically, our requests include:

- Increased transit service on SR 522 that, between Metro and Sound Transit, will provide service at least every five minutes during the peak periods and no more than every 20 minutes in the off-peak periods. Additional transit capacity is also needed on I-405.
- New and improved park-and-ride facilities in Lake Forest Park, Kenmore, and Bothell, which will complement downtown redevelopment plans.
- Completed scheduled improvements along SR 522, including the Business Access/Transit lanes project, the planned Kenmore improvements, and realignment of the SR 522 and SR 527 intersection in Bothell.
- Improved capacity on other routes, such as SR 202, SR 527, Juanita Drive, SR 104 (Ballinger Way), SR 523 (145th Street) and the Woodinville-Duvall Road. These corridors will need substantial improvements to mitigate tolling impacts.

SeaShore recognizes that finding a funding solution for the replacement of the SR 520 Bridge is an arduous task, and we thank the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee for its continued effort. With proper mitigation, implementing tolling can be an effective strategy for addressing transportation problems in the 520 corridor. We look forward to participating in further discussions as new information becomes available and recommendations for action are developed.

Sincerely,



Patrick Ewing
Councilmember, City of Bothell
Co-Chair



Ed Sterner
Councilmember, City of Lake Forest Park
Co-Chair

SeaShore Transportation Forum