



March 5, 2021

Mr. Sam Zimbabwe
Director, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)
Seattle Municipal Tower, Suite 3800
700 5th Ave
Seattle, WA 98104

Delivered via email

Re: Comments on West Marginal Way Reconfiguration Options

Dear Director Zimbabwe,

On behalf the Port of Seattle (Port) and The Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA), thank you for your continued partnership around SDOT's West Seattle High-Bridge Safety Program. Especially with respect to Spokane Street Swing Bridge construction projects and access policy, we are grateful for the continuing close coordination among our staffs.

We are reaching out to express our concerns regarding the seemingly rushed decision-making process around the reconfiguration of portions of West Marginal Way. As the major detour route in and out of West Seattle with the high bridge closed, we do not believe there should be any major changes to the road beyond the longhouse crosswalk safety improvement, until traffic returns to the high bridge. With Terminal 5 set to reopen in advance of the high bridge, we think that it is important to understand how the updated transportation system responds.

Further, as a "Major Truck Street" and over-legal route, West Marginal Way serves as a critical element of Seattle's Truck Freight System. As you are aware, according to the Complete Streets Ordinance, this means that freight has priority in this corridor, other modes can be accommodated if there is no material impact on truck mobility and access to businesses. It is also an element of the City's Heavy Haul Network, providing access to Terminal 5 and other domestic and international container terminals. The Port and NWSA have engaged in the discussion about potential design options with great interest and appreciate SDOT staff's design work and analysis related to the reconfiguration options. We fully support SDOT's goal to improve safety for all users of the corridor and stress the importance of ensuring that there is no negative impact on freight mobility.

For this reason, the Port and the Alliance commend SDOT's efforts to implement temporary and permanent pedestrian crossing improvements providing safer access to the Duwamish Longhouse. We do support these improvements being completed as quickly as possible.

The Port and NWSA also share SDOT's concerns about the safety of all users of the corridor north of the Longhouse. However, we agree with many freight, industrial and residential neighborhood, and West Seattle stakeholders that the proposed taking of the westerly of the two south-bound lanes between SW Marginal Place and S. Idaho Street should be postponed until Terminal 5 operations have restarted and the West Seattle High Bridge has reopened.

Thank for all the staff work to date, and for your staff's willingness to continue to regular engage our team on all the various WSB program issues. We look forward to continuing our successful work in ensuring that Terminal 5 will become the premier international container terminal in the Pacific Northwest and a key driver in the regional economy.

Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to contact either one of us.

Sincerely,



Stephen P. Metruck
Executive Director
Port of Seattle



John Wolfe
Chief Executive Office
Northwest Seaport Alliance

*Cc: Councilmember Alex Pederson, Transportation Committee Chair
Councilmember Lisa Herbold, District 1
Deputy Mayor Casey Sixkiller
Heather Marx, West Seattle Program Director, SDOT
Sara Zora, Reconnect West Seattle Mobility Manager, SDOT
Bradley Topol, West Marginal Way Project Manager, SDOT
Port of Seattle Commission
Port of Tacoma Commission*