



Seattle City Council

February 1, 2011

Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee III
Seattle City Hall
Boards and Commissions Room
600 4th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Advisory Committee Members,

Thank you for generously offering your time, perspective and expertise to assist the Mayor and City Council in an important evaluation of Seattle's transportation funding needs. We are looking forward to your findings and recommendations later this year as we consider making additional public investments in our City's future.

Resolution 31240 created the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee III (CTAC III) and outlined two specific tasks to be completed. Those tasks are summarized as follows:

- Develop a project list and spending plan for revenues generated from the new twenty-dollar vehicle license fee imposed by the Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD); and
- Undertake a full review of the City's transportation funding system and needs to inform a recommendation on pursuing a ballot measure to fund transportation investments.

As you begin your work with the assistance of staff from the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and the Council, we wanted to offer some additional guidance as you proceed with your review. We recognize that developing a comprehensive transportation funding package to present to Seattle voters will require careful and thoughtful evaluation of SDOT's current and future infrastructure needs in the context of the department's existing revenues. The Council encourages you to give ample time for considering as many factors as possible, including regional transportation plans and the soon to be completed Seattle Transit Master Plan, prior to making your final recommendations. We do not want the committee to feel compelled to have to rush and develop a comprehensive funding package to go before voters in 2011, but rather to take the necessary time to propose a package with clear policy recommendations and rationale that could go before the voters in 2012 or later, and that will provide voters with confidence that the measure will cover the needed investments for a significant period of time.

However, if the members of CTAC III find that it is advisable to move forward with a measure that focuses on a smaller package or a more limited set of targeted transportation investments in 2011, we would certainly welcome your guidance and input. In particular, the Council is interested in your perspective on whether coupling specific transportation investments (potentially neighborhood based) with a more substantial investment such as replacing the Seawall would be advisable.

Finally, Seattle voters generously supported a significant investment in addressing SDOT's major maintenance backlog through the Bridging the Gap (BTG) Levy. It will be important for all of us to clearly articulate the necessity for additional funding to support Seattle's existing and emergent transportation needs. We urge you to keep BTG, its robust outcomes, and potential future renewal by voters in mind as you consider your proposals for our consideration.

Again, thank you for helping us ensure that our transportation system meets our values, vision and goals for Seattle today and into the future. We look forward to hearing from you. Please do not hesitate to contact either of us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Richard Conlin
President
Seattle City Council



Tom Rasmussen
Chair, Transportation Committee
Seattle City Council