



April 29, 2011

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

RE: CTAC III testimony; Freight/Business input – Port of Seattle comments

Dear Advisory Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments to help you prioritize transportation needs and to evaluate the potential for a future ballot measure. The Port participated in the April 24th Freight/Business Roundtable and provides this written summary of comments, as requested.

Our testimony comes in context of Port of Seattle's record volume year for containers and cruise ships. In 2010, over two million TEUs (our measure of containers) came through Port of Seattle, as did over 900,000 cruise ship passengers, which has grown from zero over the last decade. With Port of Tacoma, Puget Sound ports represent the third largest international gateway in the US. Our city streets serve as the final mile connectors to international gateways in Japan, China, Korea, and domestic shipping to Alaska and Hawaii. Urban freight movement links our exports and imports—and jobs—across the Pacific.

Our comments also fit within a larger regional context, since jobs throughout our state and the Cascadia region depend on Seattle freight mobility for an efficient and effective system. Just within Seattle's two designated manufacturing and industrial centers (Duwamish and BINMIC), there are 77,000 industrial jobs.

The Port Commission highlighted this importance with a roundtable on Seattle Freight Mobility on March 29th. We heard from freight haulers and industrial businesses about their needs for policies and projects to keep freight moving—to, through and around Seattle. They rely on efficient and resilient roadway capacity for industry and trade, to keep diversity in our city's economy and family wage jobs. There was grave concern voiced about policies being implemented that diminish freight mobility, without sufficient data or consideration of the impacts.

Given the Port's over \$1 billion of recent investments in container terminal upgrades and related road and rail infrastructure, the Port is positioned with today's terminal footprint, to grow by half again to three million TEUs. We have partnered with federal, state and local partners to fund FAST Corridor projects to mitigate impacts of freight movements on local jurisdictions, including in Seattle: SR519, Duwamish ITS, E Marginal Way Overpass and the Spokane Street widening. In front of us, there is a long list of needs for the federal, state and regional funding pots, such as the SR99 Viaduct Replacement, SR509 Completion, and eventually, Interstate 5 Rehabilitation.



We appreciate your committee asking “What are priorities for Seattle’s investments?”

Our response falls into two areas of needs: major capital investments and those related to maintenance and efficiency enhancements.

Major Projects

- Mercer Corridor: Identify funding, and complete the Mercer West project including widening between 5th Avenue N and Dexter Avenue N under Aurora Avenue. Extend the southbound left-turn pocket on Elliott Avenue W at W Mercer Place. These improvements support the needs of freight and transit.
- New Surface Alaskan Way: This new roadway and the new connection to Elliott/Western Avenue must accommodate city freight traffic flows especially between the two Manufacturing Industrial Centers. Waterfront Seattle will be most successful when the transportation needs are well handled.
- South Park Bridge partnership: Identify funding sources for the city’s \$15 million commitment.

Maintenance, Efficiency and Planning Projects

- EMW Phase 2, North Argo Access: The Port is partnering with the City to define a new route to Argo Yard minimizing the truck weave from Terminals 5 & 18 on E Marginal Way to Diagonal Avenue S: The project includes intersection and pavement improvement work around Colorado Avenue S, Diagonal Avenue S and S Denver Street near the Union Pacific’s Argo Yard Gates.
- Seattle Truck Mobility Improvements: This is a program of projects co-sponsored with FMSIB, including channelization and turning radius improvements, directional and informational signage, pavement repair, and signal improvements. These projects, especially in industrial zones, recognize the unique considerations required for freight mobility.
- First Avenue S and East Marginal Way Intersection Improvements (north end of First Avenue S Bridge): The long-term operational needs of this intersection should be evaluated and consider the increased traffic associated with the future extension of SR 509 south of SeaTac Airport.
- We support SDOT’s efforts to ensure a robust maintenance program for all streets and bridges, which is vital to mobility for all modes of travel.

Thank you for your consideration and support for Seattle freight mobility. Please call if you have any questions at 206-787-3778.

Sincerely,



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