



NEWS RELEASE
**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR &
SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL**

Mayor Mike McGinn
Council President Richard Conlin
Councilmember Jean Godden
Councilmember Tom Rasmussen

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**Seattle Mayor McGinn and City Councilmembers identify
additional funds to improve city streets**

\$3 million to boost road repair funding by 33 percent and save jobs

SEATTLE — Seattle Mayor McGinn, Seattle City Council President Conlin, and Councilmembers Rasmussen and Godden today jointly announced that the City will commit \$3 million from the sale of the Rubble Yard to fund additional roadway work in 2011. The commitment will provide a 33 percent boost in 2011 street repair funding, preventing the elimination of 21 positions in the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) while also providing a small increase for bike improvements.

“This is about funding the basics. Our streets are deteriorating from years of neglect. Addressing this problem is a priority for the public, our business community and my administration.” said Mayor Mike McGinn.

By adding nearly \$3 million to the original \$8.264 million for street work, the Mayor and City Council expect to significantly enhance SDOT’s ability to repair streets and roads in 2011. The decision funds more major street surface repairs, allowing 15 to 20 more improvement projects such as concrete panel replacement or resurfaced asphalt segments. It also adds resources to SDOT’s pothole repair budget, enabling the department to fix approximately 5,000 more potholes. Over the first six months of 2011 SDOT has filled 19,850 potholes, spending 70 percent of its pothole budget. The \$3 million also provides funding for curb and pavement markings, and bicycle spot improvements.

“Taking care of our roads and bridges is essential. Despite the work we are doing, people are rightly not satisfied with their condition, and we need to respond. This is not going to fix every problem, but it’s a shot in the arm for our road repair program,” stated Council

President Richard Conlin. “And we are saving 11 staff who would have lost their jobs. What a great way to use these state funds!”

With this funding SDOT can retain 11 staff members whose positions would have been eliminated in July, primarily cement finishers and maintenance laborers. It will additionally temporarily protect 10 more transportation employees who were at risk of having their positions eliminated due to a decline in utility cut restoration and reimbursable work.

“Everywhere I go, people ask me if we can do more to fix the roads and make our streets safer for all users – drivers, bicyclists and bus riders,” said Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, Transportation Committee Chair. “These additional one-time dollars do not provide a long-term solution to our declining transportation revenues, but they will allow us to catch up on potholes, providing a smoother, safer ride and, at the same time, saving us from more expensive repairs in the future.”

“I’m delighted we have located resources to start repairing our roads. We’ve got a great plan and, since my committee is just now reviewing the supplementary budget, we’ll be able to act quickly. This will save jobs, fix roads and retain an experienced crew that, otherwise, would have been laid off,” said Councilmember Jean Godden.

The City of Seattle has entered into agreement, already authorized by the Seattle City Council, to sell the Rubble Yard located at Sixth Ave N and Harrison St to the Washington State Department of Transportation for \$19.8 million. The sale of the yard, previously utilized by SDOT for material staging and temporary debris storage, provides funds that can be used only for transportation purposes.

While the SDOT director must still recommend how the remaining funds should be allocated, the Mayor and Council agreed to provide \$3 million to fund roadway maintenance. This spending proposal will now move to the City Council for legislative approval. This approval is likely to come as a part of the first quarter supplemental budget ordinance that will be taken up by Finance and Budget Committee in the next few weeks. This action will authorize SDOT to spend up to \$3 million this year.

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