



City of Seattle

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March 1, 2006

Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck
Urban Development and Planning Committee
City Hall, 600 Fourth Avenue
P.O. Box 94749
Seattle, WA 98124

RE: Waterfront Concept Plan

Dear Councilmember Steinbrueck:

As you are aware, the Seattle Planning Commission (SPC) has been advising staff and City officials on Seattle's Central Waterfront planning since 2003. The Commission has also been involved in reviewing proposals for the replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct since 2001. We have consistently endorsed the tunnel option as our preferred alternative based on urban design and planning considerations. In 2005 the Commission continued its involvement in waterfront planning by working with City staff in their efforts to craft a Waterfront Concept Plan.

We strongly support the Waterfront Concept Plan. The Concept Plan derives from extensive public planning and citizen participation and provides a policy framework for more detailed planning work on the Waterfront.

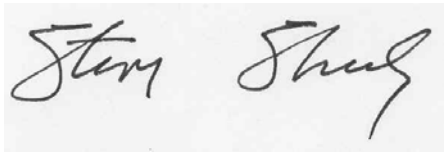
The Waterfront Concept Plan provides important guidance for future use of public spaces, integration of multiple modes of transportation and connection among iconic views along the Waterfront. We recognize that moving from the Concept Plan to a detailed list of physical improvements that will comprise a Public Realm plan will require a good deal of time, and we are concerned that the City's waterfront planning efforts will fall behind both the engineering work of the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement and also numerous other efforts underway that need cohesive coordination. We believe that that Waterfront Planning effort should be leading all of these efforts.

Furthermore, we believe it is vital that the key elements of the Waterfront Concept Plan be retained for both the "Full Tunnel" option and the "Core Project" option for Viaduct replacement. We are specifically concerned that the lid to Victor Steinbrueck Park and the pedestrian connections to the waterfront as far south as King Street will be not completed if Core Project concept is pursued. Should the Core Project concept not fund these key elements, it is crucial that engineering in the Core Project does not preclude the addition of these elements when additional funding becomes available in the future.

We urge the Council to adopt the Waterfront Concept Plan and move forward in the next phase of planning for the waterfront including the creation of the Public Realm Plan. The City of Seattle must seize the chance to create a vital, active waterfront for all.

We thank you for your consideration and would be happy to respond to any questions or requests for additional information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Sheehy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steve Sheehy, Chair
Seattle Planning Commission

cc: Mayor Greg Nickels
Seattle City Council
Sung Yang, Mayor's Office
Grace Crunican, Director - Seattle Department of Transportation
Diane Sugimura, Director - Seattle Department of Planning and Development
Susan Crowley Saffery, Director - Seattle Office of Intergovernmental Relations
John Rahaim, Director of City Planning - Department of Planning and Development
Guillermo Romano, Department of Planning and Development
Robert Scully, Department of Planning and Development
Ron Paananen, Viaduct Project Manager - Washington State Department of Transportation
Steve Pearce, Project Manager - Seattle Department of Transportation
David Spiker, Chair -- Seattle Design Commission
Layne Cubell, Seattle Design Commission