



City of Seattle

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The Seattle Freight Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the City in development of a functional and efficient freight system and on all matters related to freight and the impact that actions by the City may have upon the freight environment.

City Council Resolution
31243

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of Seattle Freight Advisory Board, we offer strong support for the City of Seattle's Heavy Haul Network (HHN) Planning Project and respectfully urge full funding through the USDOT's FY2026 BUILD grant program. **This project advances national supply chain resilience, strengthens critical freight corridors serving international trade, and supports the efficient movement of goods between marine terminals and rail infrastructure.**

If awarded, grant funds will advance project readiness by completing pre-construction planning for priority HHN segments, including key routes on Harbor Island and along Diagonal Avenue. These segments serve as crucial local connections between the Seaport container terminals and the Argo Rail Yard, forming a critical first and last-mile link in regional and national freight movement. The planning phase would position these segments for timely and cost-effective implementation by producing detailed existing conditions and needs assessments, concept designs, cost estimates, and preliminary project budgets.

Washington is among the most trade dependent states in the nation, with the Seattle-Tacoma gateway acting as a central economic engine for the broader Pacific Northwest region.

Together, the Northwest Seaport Alliance, the Port of Seattle, and the Port of Tacoma supported more than 265,000 jobs and generated nearly \$55 billion in business output across Washington state and the broader region in 2023, helping connect regional producers and consumers to national and global markets. Freight moving through Harbor Island and the Duwamish Manufacturing and Industrial Center (MIC) sustains industries ranging from health, construction, maritime, manufacturing, and logistics, to professional services, life science, technology, and agriculture. Nearly every product passing through reaches its final destination via some combination of truck, ship, train, or pipeline, supported by a coordinated network of industrial centers, ports, railyards, and local and regional truck routes.

At the center of this complex network is Seattle's HHN, a set of designated corridors carrying the heaviest and most frequent freight flows, serving as a backbone for Seattle's goods movement system. In addition to standard freight traffic, the HHN accommodates oversized and overweight "over-legal" trucks transporting exceptionally heavy, indivisible loads between the Port and transload facilities, with permits required for operation on designated routes. These corridors face unique infrastructure and operational challenges due to the size and volume of freight they carry, requiring specialized planning to maintain safety, reliability, and efficiency.

The City of Seattle has and continues to show robust support for the HHN. Foremost, truck drivers with overweight vehicles operating in and out of the HHN are required to pay for a permit, making it user friendly for inspections at the port and rail yards. Likewise, the 2024 voter approved Seattle Transportation Levy allocated \$8 million over eight years to maintain and improve the HHN, by identifying and prioritizing needs, followed by developing sufficient design improvements to leverage state and federal grant support. As an illustration of the Levy's goals at work for HHN, consultants are just completing a pavement analysis on the HHN as part of a Safe and Swift Agreement between the Port of Seattle and City of Seattle, preliminarily determining that a considerable portion is in need of reconstruction. Finally, the 1.4-mile-long East Marginal Way Corridor Improvement Project provides substantial assurance of the city's determination to invest in the HHN. The first of the three segments of the project was completed in 2025 at a cost of \$72 million, which included full 15-inch-thick concrete street reconstruction to better support heavier trucks, vehicle weigh in motion to help Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) to track wear and tear on streets, improved intersections for safer turning movements, and tremendously safer bicycle and pedestrian interfaces with trucks. These are just a few highlights of the city's dedication to maintaining the integrity of the network.

Funding pre-construction planning now would ensure these critical corridors are well-understood, future capital investments are targeted and cost-effective, and Seattle's HHN and freight systems continue to support regional and national supply chains. We appreciate your favorable consideration of Seattle's request to fully fund this effort.

Sincerely,


Stan Ryter (Feb 23, 2026 09:03:54 PST)

Stanley Ryter, PE
Seattle Freight Advisory Chair
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