**\*DRAFT and confidential not for distribution\***

November 12, 2019

Mr. Sam Zimbabwe
Director of Seattle Department of Transportation
Seattle Municipal Tower
700 5th Avenue, Suite 3800
Seattle, WA 98104

West Marginal Way Roadway Revisions at Duwamish Longhouse

Dear Director Zimbabwe:

The Seattle Freight Advisory Board (SFAB) appreciates this opportunity to provide feedback on the recent roadway modifications to the striping on West Marginal Way adjacent to the Duwamish Longhouse at 4705 W. Marginal Way SW. The SFAB is concerned with this modification related to issues of design standards, the length this temporary condition will be in place, and the implementation process. These concerns are described below.

Background: We understand that this redesign is being driven by the lack of parking to accommodate events at the Longhouse and a need to facilitate pedestrian crossings of this high volume, multilane facility that is also a major truck street. This lack of parking has driven a temporary solution to provide a small number of on-street parking spaces adjacent to the Longhouse while reducing the roadway cross section to four-lanes (one lane southbound, two lanes northbound and a center turn lane). This lane reduction occurs in a long section of horizontal curve. Additionally, the restriping has been suggested to be a short-term, temporary solution and the five-lane cross section (2 lanes in each direction with a two-way-left-turn lane) will eventually be restored.

**Design standards** – As with most issues where freight mixes with other modes, our primary concern is safety. In the City of Seattle adopted Freight Master Plan, W. Marginal Way is classified as a Major Truck Street and also an existing Seaport Highway Connector.

* Merging the southbound lanes for large trucks on high volume, multi-lane arterials, where there is a horizontal curve is a concern.
* Merging large trucks from two-lanes down to one requires trucks to decelerate and rely on mirrors. This will increase the vehicle volume in that one lane. The increased per lane volume and merging is a concern.
* After the lanes are merged and where parking is provided, the southbound lane is shown to be 10’ wide, which is not optimal, as it is insufficient for large trucks, especially adjacent to on-street parking activity.
* If the parking lanes are used infrequently, it may invite vehicles to infringe on the painted-out areas and drive in the parking lane.
* Further, the lane reduction may shorten the gap between vehicles, making it harder for pedestrians find a break to cross.

**Duration of temporary modifications** – The restriping and roadway modification that provides seven on-street parking spaces has been described as temporary until a long-term solution is identified, for parking and pedestrian crossing. There appears to be no certainty regarding how long these revisions will be in place and when the original five-lane striping will be restored. This is a concern for SFAB because this condition can become permanent without an active process for the development of solutions. We take some hope that city council budget action will fund design of a permanent solution restoring the lanes. Solutions could include increasing off-street parking adjacent to the long house or providing a safer crossing of W. Marginal Way for pedestrians linking to available parking on the east side of W. Marginal Way.

**Design process – I**n the future, the SFAB believes there is benefit to all for SFAB to be consulted as part of the design development process and prior to modifications on Major Truck Streets like W. Marginal Way. The Major Truck Street classification indicates that there is a high volume of trucks relying on the roadway to deliver goods. We are concerned that the design and operations may not be consistent with the freight master plan system needs. Our highest priority is to preserve the network of freight facilities serving the manufacturing and industrial centers, supporting family wage jobs, and safely moving the considerable volume of goods through the city. The SFAB provides the perspective of frequent users along with an understanding of the importance to the overall freight system.

The SFAB would like to better understand if there are options for improving safety by increasing the lane width to 12 feet and also a timeline for initiating a design process to determine an ultimate solution to either safely cross pedestrians or increase parking on-site. We look forward to working with SDOT to identify these ultimate solutions.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Acutanza

Chair, Seattle Freight Advisory Board