



# City of Seattle

Ed Murray, Mayor

Seattle  
Freight  
Advisory  
Board

Warren Aakervik, Chair

Bari Bookout

Katherine Casseday

Terry Finn

Timothy Hillis

Frank Rose

Pat Cohn

Hal Cooper Jr.

Dan McKisson

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

April 30, 2015

The Honorable  
Edward Murray  
Mayor  
City of Seattle  
PO Box  
Seattle, WA 98124-

## Re: Comments on the Move Seattle Draft Levy Proposal

Dear Mayor Murray:

In recent weeks, the Board had the opportunity to discuss drafts of Move Seattle, your Draft 10-year Strategic Vision for Transportation, the related transportation levy proposal that is the subject of this letter, the draft report of the Freight Access Project Report, and various preliminary documents supporting the development of Seattle's first Freight Master Plan. A recent presentation to City Council prompted a review of the work and accomplishments of the Board since its inception.

In looking at these efforts, we would like to congratulate you on the impressive progress the City has made since the Board began its work. The Board appreciates your insistence that the City move towards development of a multimodal transportation systems approach that considers the needs of freight. We support your efforts to ensure the City's freight mobility needs are understood and addressed in Seattle's transportation planning and programming processes.

Move Seattle, and the related draft levy proposal, as well as the Freight Access Project and the Freight Master Plan, show that there is now significant consideration of freight needs and issues. However, our evaluation also made clear that much remains to be done to ensure that freight receives equal consideration on a permanent basis, and to make certain that the public and elected officials understand why that is necessary. Here are our comments on the levy proposal:

### An Interconnected City

As currently described, the projects supporting an Interconnected City are focused on moving people by a variety of modes. Providing people with a choice of modes is an important goal supported strongly by FAB. However, we are concerned that there is no mention of an effort to develop a freight system complementary to that for moving people. Yet, a well-functioning, resilient system of truck streets—which reliably and efficiently move freight and connect all parts of the City—is essential to the economic well-being and quality of life of the City. We are particularly concerned about Move Seattle's list of Complete Street, rather than Complete Corridor, projects on Major Truck Streets. The Board would like to urge you to use (and reflect in the project descriptions) a Complete Corridor approach that ensures freight mobility remains the priority on these facilities.

Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 3800, PO Box 34996, Seattle, WA 98124-4996  
Tel: (206) 684-4103 Tel: (206) 684-4524 Fax: (206) 684-3272

Web: [www.seattle.gov/sfab/](http://www.seattle.gov/sfab/)

An equal opportunity employer. Accommodations for people with disabilities provided on request.

**A Safe City**

The Board strongly supports this levy goal, and the City's efforts to make Seattle's streets and bridges safer. However, we are concerned that safety projects on principal and major arterials that are heavily used by trucks could have a severe impact on the ability to move freight through the City. This issue is compounded by the fact that this proposal was developed before the Freight Master Plan will be completed. The Board looks forward to working together with your staff to ensure that we improve the safety of all users while protecting vital routes for freight.

**An Affordable City**

The Board appreciates the proposal's emphasis on maintaining our busiest streets. Bad pavement increases both the operating and maintenance costs of trucks. This affects our bottom line and raises the cost of delivering goods to the residents and businesses of Seattle. From a freight perspective, an affordable City also means that Move Seattle projects avoid negative impacts on freight mobility: Increased travel time and more time stuck in traffic both increase costs. We would be grateful if this concept could be included in the strategies for this levy goal.

**A Vibrant City**

Improving mobility for freight and delivery vehicles is a major goal of the Board, and we are happy to see it incorporated in the proposal's goals for a Vibrant City. Adding a grade-separated east-west connection in the Duwamish, improving East Marginal Way to accommodate Heavy Haul and a targeted spot improvement program are central components of a freight mobility program for the city. That being said, this list comprises a relatively small—albeit costly—portion of the freight mobility improvement projects identified by the Freight Access Project, and it does not include any projects that may be identified by the Freight Master Plan. We would be more comfortable with this proposal if it included a more robust Freight Improvement Program for mid-range projects (\$50,000 to \$250,000). The Spot Improvement Program, which covers projects of \$50,000 or less, could potentially be moved to the annual budget and funded as a matter of course.

Again, thank you for your leadership in raising the understanding of the need for paying attention to freight mobility here in Seattle. The levy proposal, combined with the Freight Access Project and the Freight Master Plan, are great steps in the right direction. We trust that they will be followed by continued efforts to maintain and improve our knowledge and functionality of the freight system, as has been the case with other modes.

The Board is looking forward to working with your staff on these issues. As always, I would be happy to talk with you about our concerns and answer any questions you or your staff might have. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Warren Aakervik  
Chair  
Freight Advisory Board  
City of Seattle

Cc: Scott Kubly, Director, SDOT  
City Council, City of Seattle  
Allison Schwartz, Move Seattle Levy Outreach Lead