



Date: May 18, 2017
To: Seattle Design Commission – Michael Jenkins, Director; Ross Tilghman, Chair
From: John Feit, Chair, Lid I-5 Steering Committee
RE: **Introduction to the Lid I-5 Feasibility Study as a WSCC Addition Public Benefit**

The Lid I-5 Steering Committee presents a draft outline of the proposed Lid I-5 Feasibility Study, which is requested as a public benefit associated with the Washington State Convention Center (WSCC) Addition.

In response to questions raised by the Design Commission, City departments, and other project stakeholders, this document provides clarity on the proposed purpose, management, and scope of a study of lidding Interstate 5.

To complete a technically robust study which reflects the community's priorities and which is truly a public benefit, the study requires up to \$1.5 million in funding. This figure was first presented as the higher range cost estimate by the WSCC at the December 2016 Street and Alley Vacations Public Benefits Open House. At this event the public also ranked the Feasibility and SDOT's proposed Pine-Boren Lid Park as their highest priorities.

We have received confirmation from the Mayor's office, department leaders, and City Councilmembers that they will accept study funding, intended for use by the City of Seattle, as a public benefit. The cost estimate has been affirmed by City staff and is consistent with similar feasibility studies of complex freeway corridors in other cities. The full funding request is necessary to result in a meaningful study that is usable for the next steps of planning and design of future Interstate 5 lids.

Historically, the City Council has been very specific about requiring physical, immediate, and lasting public benefits in exchange for street and alley vacations. Proposals for planning efforts have been disfavored but implementing plans have been supported. However, there are numerous precedents in Seattle for funding technical similar analyses and feasibility studies through a monetary public benefits contribution. Recent examples include funding for an analysis of 7th Avenue bicycle lanes and the Bell Street Concept Plan.

The Steering Committee provided an earlier draft of the study outline to the WSCC development team, but we have not yet had any indication they are adopting this outline as part of their proposal to fund the Feasibility Study. We do not believe their offered funding level being presented today is adequate, but nevertheless we are enthusiastic they have proposed a starting point and we look forward to engaging with them further.

This outline is a living document and will continue to be refined as we receive new information and the public benefits process moves forward. We welcome any and all feedback from the Design Commission, City staff, and the WSCC to ensure the Feasibility Study will be truly beneficial to the community at large. Thank you.

Lid I-5 Steering Committee

John Feit, Chair
Dana Behar
Scott Bonjukian
Jim Castanes
Jordan Cowhig
Gemma Daggatt
Liz Dunn
Bruno Lambert
Thomas Pitchford