

October 31, 2019



www.lidi5.org
mail@lidi5.org

Mission

Building the case and constituency for lidding Interstate 5 and building a more connected, sustainable, and equitable Seattle.

Steering Committee

Natalie Bicknell
Scott Bonjukian, co-chair
Jim Castanes
Cormac Diggins
Liz Dunn
John Feit, co-chair
Bruno Lambert
Sony Purba

Advisory Council

Thatcher Bailey
Rebecca Barnes
Maria Barrientos
Dana Behar
Greg Briggs
Bradley Calvert
Riisa Conklin
Gemma Daggett
Amy Grotefendt
Cate Hardy
Ronnie Henderson
Phen Huang
Alex Hudson
Leslie Koch
Josh Labelle
Paul Lambros
Al Levine
Mike Malone
Shannon Nichol
Dorothy Nicholls
Greg Nickels
Lee Otis
Rico Quirindongo
Chip Ragen
Tom Rasmussen
Scott Redman
Jon Scholes
Jared Smith
Leslie Smith
Diane Sugimura
David Thyer
Maiko Winkler-Chin
Scott Wyatt

TO: Seattle City Council
Lisa Herbold
Bruce Harrell, Council President
Kshama Sawant
Abel Pacheco Jr.
Debora Juarez
Mike O'Brien
Sally Bagshaw
Teresa Mosqueda
Lorena González

CC: Chris Saleeba and Johnathan Lewis (SDOT)
Garry Papers (OPCD)

FROM: Lid I-5 Steering Committee
Seattle, WA

RE: **Funding for the Downtown Street Network Study, a Next Step Identified by *Imagine Greater Downtown***

Dear Councilmembers,

Lid I-5 strongly supports funding the Downtown Street Network Study in the 2019/2020 transportation budget. This study is proposed by Seattle's *Imagine Greater Downtown* initiative as a critical next step for many public realm projects, including lidding Interstate 5. The study is a critical project for our city's thousands of Center City residents, hundreds of thousands of employees, and millions of annual visitors.

Council should consult with SDOT staff to determine the necessary project scope and budget.

City funding of a Downtown Street Network Study will be highly complementary to WSDOT's own planning work in central Seattle. We are concurrently supporting the joint Seattle-WSDOT application for federal funding of an I-5 corridor scenario analysis, which will advance ideas for a more efficient and resilient transportation system across our region.

Further, close coordination with WSDOT will be needed. The study must closely examine the configuration of all Center City freeway ramps in relation to maximizing lidding opportunities. Pedestrian safety and transit efficiency is also a priority: *Imagine Greater Downtown* says we must "reduce the impact of freeway ramp traffic on Greater Downtown streets while maintaining access to support local and regional economic growth" (page 44).

The Downtown Street Network Study should also consider potential street connections and new mobility options facilitated by lidding I-5 at Terry Avenue, Minor Avenue, and Yale Avenue.

Earlier this year the OPCD Lid Feasibility Study consultant team, led by engineering firm WSP, preliminarily determined lids are technically feasible between Madison Street and Olive Way. In other words, they confirmed lids over I-5 can be reasonably designed to reknit our most populous neighborhoods, expand public land, and reduce air and noise pollution.

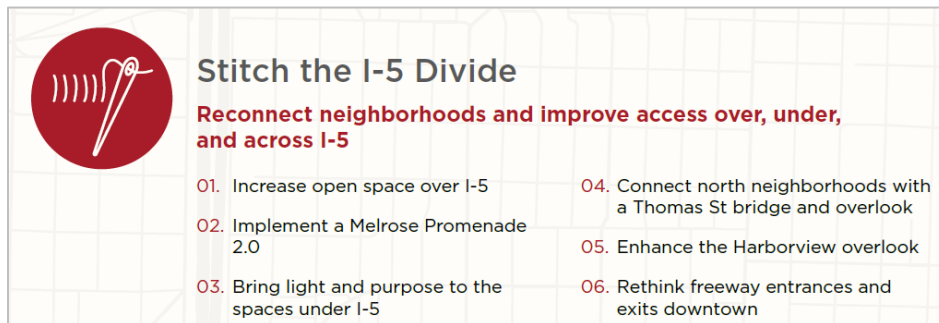
We are thrilled that *Imagine Greater Downtown* includes “Stitching the I-5 Divide” as one of the Big Ideas, but the data and findings from the Downtown Street Network Study will also yield valuable information for other mobility planning efforts in Downtown Seattle, such as re-purposing streets for open space, expanding transit priority, expanding the bike network, and improving freight operations for local businesses.

OPCD’s lid study will be complete in spring 2020. It’s not too early to jump start the next steps in this bold vision, which is supported by the public and our diverse coalition of organizations and nonprofits. This simple request to fund the Downtown Street Network Study is how the City Council can make a difference now for future generations.

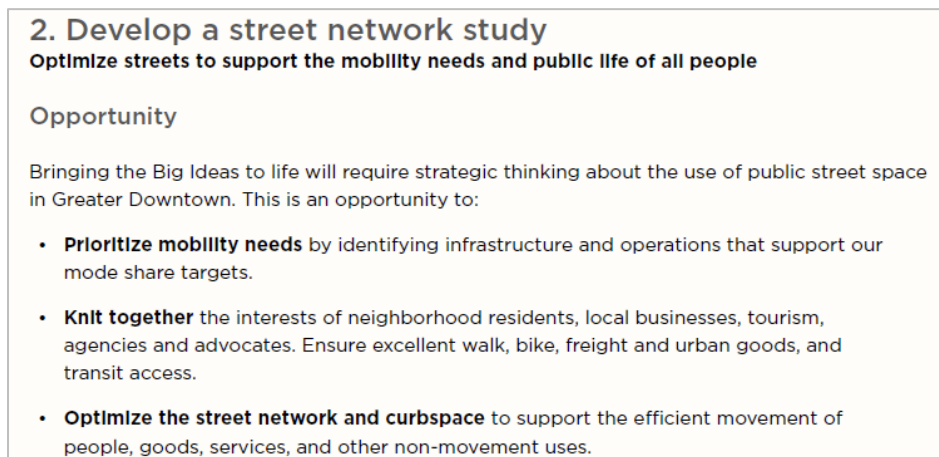
Thank you for all the hard work you do on behalf of all Seattleites. If you have any questions regarding our budget request, or anything else regarding the Lid I-5 campaign, please don’t hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely,
Lid I-5 Steering Committee

Below are excerpts from Imagine Greater Downtown.



The graphic features a red circular icon with a white needle and thread on the left. To its right, the title "Stitch the I-5 Divide" is displayed in a bold, dark blue font. Below the title, a red sub-header reads "Reconnect neighborhoods and improve access over, under, and across I-5". Six numbered points are listed in two columns: 01. Increase open space over I-5; 02. Implement a Melrose Promenade 2.0; 03. Bring light and purpose to the spaces under I-5; 04. Connect north neighborhoods with a Thomas St bridge and overlook; 05. Enhance the Harborview overlook; 06. Rethink freeway entrances and exits downtown.



The graphic has a dark blue heading "2. Develop a street network study" followed by a sub-heading "Optimize streets to support the mobility needs and public life of all people". Below this is a section titled "Opportunity" with a paragraph: "Bringing the Big Ideas to life will require strategic thinking about the use of public street space in Greater Downtown. This is an opportunity to:". This is followed by three bullet points: "Prioritize mobility needs" by identifying infrastructure and operations that support our mode share targets; "Knit together" the interests of neighborhood residents, local businesses, tourism, agencies and advocates. Ensure excellent walk, bike, freight and urban goods, and transit access; "Optimize the street network and curbspace" to support the efficient movement of people, goods, services, and other non-movement uses.