

November 18, 2020



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TO: Councilmember Alex Pedersen
Chair, Council Transportation & Utilities Committee

CC: Councilmembers Lisa Herbold, Tammy J. Morales,
Kshama Sawant, Debora Juarez, Dan Strauss, Andrew J.
Lewis, Teresa Mosqueda, and M. Lorena González

FROM: Lid I-5 Steering Committee
Seattle, WA

RE: Support for Bridge Maintenance Funding

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
Liz Dunn
John Feit, co-chair
Bruno Lambert

Advisory Council

Thatcher Bailey
Rebecca Barnes
Maria Barrientos
Dana Behar
Greg Briggs
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

Dear Councilmember Pedersen,

Lid I-5 is a community organization with the mission to bridge communities divided by our city’s largest urban highway. Because Interstate 5 itself is in great need of preservation resources, we understand the vital need of infrastructure funding. We are writing to you today in support of the proposed local \$20 car-tab fee for bridge maintenance.

While Seattle’s car tab fees historically have supported transit service, we are buoyed by the landslide passage of Seattle’s Proposition 1 sales tax and the Washington Supreme Court’s ruling invalidating Initiative 976. Future additional car tab fees should indeed continue to focus on much-needed transit service and walking/bicycling infrastructure for our growing city. In the meantime, during a period of temporarily reduced transit demand, we agree the situation presents an opportunity to utilize this resource for additional underfunded transportation needs including bridge maintenance.

Because the proposed revenue falls short of the City Auditor’s estimated needs, we request prioritizing the additional funding for the bridges that are most critical to the entire community. These include:

- City bridges that serve high-capacity/high-frequency bus routes.
- City bridges that carry bicycle and pedestrian connections of citywide importance.
- City bridges that are most vulnerable to damage, closure, or collapse in the next earthquake.
- WSDOT overpasses that carry city streets over Interstate 5 and other state routes, particularly in the Center City. The resilience of these bridges is critical to neighborhood connections and maintaining emergency freight and hospital access after the next earthquake. Funding here might be limited to joint study/planning efforts rather than direct construction/retrofit funding because these are state-owned assets.

The car tab funding should be focused on standard upkeep and seismic resilience on these bridges. Under no circumstances should this additional funding be used to expand private vehicular capacity. With a rapidly dwindling carbon budget worldwide, Seattle must play its part in reducing and mitigating climate change. We also strongly believe in Seattle's goal for Vision Zero and value safe and convenient human-powered transportation, which relies on phasing out auto-centric design and policies.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. Bridge maintenance is an understated but critical need in our city. We are available should you have any questions about our support and our requested funding priorities.

Sincerely,
Lid I-5 Steering Committee