

**CITY OF SEATTLE**

**RESOLUTION 32100**

A RESOLUTION supporting the development of lids across Interstate 5.

WHEREAS, since its construction in 1965, Interstate 5 has created a rift through the center of Seattle, splitting neighborhoods and dividing Downtown Seattle from adjacent communities; and

WHEREAS, in response to the impacts of Interstate 5 on the City and in recognition of opportunities to create new open space, better connections between neighborhoods, and opportunities for residential development including affordable housing, community members have come together to form Lid I-5 to advocate for lids across the interstate; and

WHEREAS, in response to the efforts of Lid I-5, the Seattle Convention Center provided funding for the development of a feasibility study to identify whether a lid across the interstate between Downtown Seattle and the Pike/Pine, Capitol Hill and First Hill neighborhoods would be feasible; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) prepared the I-5 Lid Feasibility Study (Lid Study), which found that lidding between Downtown Seattle and Capitol Hill and Pike/Pine would be feasible but challenging; and

WHEREAS, the Lid Study found that a range of different uses for future lids of I-5, including open space and housing, could be feasible uses on top of a future lid but that the location of on-ramps and off-ramps, parking requirements, and slopes will create challenges to future lids; and

1 WHEREAS, the City’s Comprehensive Plan Policy GS 3.13 states that the City will “Support  
2 efforts to use lids and other connections over highways that separate neighborhoods,  
3 especially when such lids provide opportunities to reconnect neighborhoods and provide  
4 amenities such as affordable housing, open space, or pedestrian and bike connections to  
5 transit stations.” and

6 WHEREAS, Comprehensive Plan Policy T 3.12 calls on the City to “Look for opportunities to  
7 reestablish or improve connections across I-5 and State Highways by... constructing lids,  
8 especially where these can also enhance opportunities for development or open space,  
9 affordable housing, and neighborhood cohesion.”; and

10 WHEREAS, freeway lids, including the lids that support Freeway Park and Sam Smith Park in  
11 Seattle, have successfully connected neighborhoods divided by interstates, provide  
12 community amenities, and reduce the impacts of interstates in those neighborhoods; and

13 WHEREAS, the Washington State Department of Transportation’s Revive I-5 project is working  
14 to include pavement repair and full replacement, expansion joints, and seismic work to  
15 strengthen bridges against earthquakes; and

16 WHEREAS, lids can be incorporated into seismic improvements to Interstate 5 and its bridges;  
17 and

18 WHEREAS, construction of lids can support the economic recovery of Downtown Seattle after  
19 the COVID-19 emergency; and

20 WHEREAS, lids can provide for safer crossings of I-5, increasing pedestrian activity on both  
21 sides of the Interstate, and

22 WHEREAS, the City is currently updating plans for many neighborhoods adjacent to or divided  
23 by I-5 that could benefit from lids; NOW, THEREFORE,

1 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE**  
2 **MAYOR CONCURRING, THAT:**

3 Section 1. The City of Seattle supports efforts to lid Interstate 5, where feasible within the  
4 city limits, including but not limited to the area between South Dearborn Street and Thomas  
5 Street, and the area between NE 45<sup>th</sup> Street and NE 50<sup>th</sup> Street.

6 Section 2. The City Council supports the intent of the Office of Planning and Community  
7 Development (OPCD) and the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) to work with the  
8 Washington State Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Federal  
9 and State elected officials, and Lid I-5 to:

10 A. Integrate lidding concepts into transportation plans and plans for neighborhoods  
11 adjacent to and crossing Interstate 5, including the Seattle Transportation Plan and updates to the  
12 Downtown, First Hill/Capitol Hill, University District, and Northgate Urban Center plans;

13 B. Explore whether a City-chartered Public Development Authority (PDA) would be an  
14 appropriate tool to lead and facilitate the development of plans and projects to lid segments of  
15 Interstate 5, including the potential of a PDA to facilitate mixed-use and commercial  
16 development through public-private partnerships;

17 C. Seek federal grants, including a federal Reconnecting Communities grant, to continue  
18 technical work and engagement, including work to develop specific proposals for lids in the  
19 context of necessary seismic work for Interstate 5 and other lidding opportunities that may arise;  
20 and

21 D. Identify if ramps to and from Interstate 5 can be removed to facilitate lidding and  
22 reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflicts.

