



King County

Larry Phillips

Councilmember, District Four

Metropolitan King County Council

June 2, 2010

The Honorable Christine Gregoire
Governor
State of Washington
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Gregoire,

Thank you for inviting me to serve on the Alaskan Way Viaduct Program Oversight Committee (AWVPOC), which has been identified as an information-sharing forum for discussing aspects of the bored tunnel project and related program elements. I look forward to participating; serving on this committee will enable me to monitor the program and keep my colleagues on the County Council informed in case they are asked to review and approve legislation related to the program.

In January 2009, you, Mayor Nickels, and Executive Sims signed a non-binding letter of agreement expressing your support for a series of investments on transit, city streets and the construction of a proposed bored tunnel as the recommended alternative for replacing the seismically vulnerable and aging Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall. The transit improvements part of the agreement was premised on enactment of new state legislation to fund the improvements through a .1% countywide Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET) to be authorized by the state and enacted by King County. Unfortunately, the legislature did not enact this funding source.

The King County Council has already addressed deficits in our transit system of more than \$260 million over the last two budget cycles. As Chair of the Council's Environment and Transportation Committee, I am working to fill the remaining identified \$120 million transit budget gap. If no solutions are found, this remaining gap will require cutting 600,000 annual service hours—17 percent of the system—plus 400,000 hours of planned service improvements by 2015. Under these circumstances, new revenues are essential to maintaining our current system, let alone growing it to achieve the new mobility goals identified with the Viaduct program.

Nonetheless, I recognize that implementation of the Alaskan Way Viaduct program continues to be an important transportation priority for our state and region. In doing so, I also recognize that it is important to keep the program on schedule and on budget while achieving our critical transportation, safety, environmental and community goals.

Establishing the program oversight committee is a constructive step to assist with these challenges. Made up of representatives from the executive and legislative branches of each of the four governments, this committee will not be a decision-making body but will serve as a single point for reporting on cost, financing, schedule, contracts, project delivery, and risk management. The committee is a forum for discussing issues of interest to the four participating governments. Any binding decisions on revenues or expenditures would require approval by the legislative authority of the affected governments. As such, my participation in the AWVPOC is conditional on King County being held harmless by the state of Washington and any other participating jurisdiction for any cost overruns associated with the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement project for which King County is not directly responsible as a contracting entity.

I look forward to working with you to identify the resources for the unfunded program elements that you, Mayor Nickels, and Executive Sims identified as desirable in January 2009, including investments in bus service to Downtown Seattle and related city street improvements for bus operations. I support the oversight committee as a means of sharing information and identifying the action items needed to ensure this program has the resources to reach a successful conclusion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Phillips", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Larry Phillips, Councilmember
Metropolitan King County Council, District Four

cc: The Honorable Dow Constantine, King County Executive
Fred Jarrett, Deputy King County Executive
The Honorable Mary Margaret Haugen, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
The Honorable Judy Clibborn, Chair, House Transportation Committee
The Honorable Frank Chopp, Speaker of the House
Ron Judd, Director of Community and Stakeholder Outreach, Alaskan Way
Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program, WSDOT