



King County

Larry Phillips

Councilmember, District Four

Metropolitan King County Council

January 13, 2009

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

Dear Governor Gregoire,
Christine

I applaud today's recommendation to replace the central waterfront portion of the Alaskan Way Viaduct with a bored bypass tunnel along with surface and transit improvements. Thank you for your courageous decision; I believe it represents the best solution for our region now and well into the future.

As you know, I strongly support the bored bypass tunnel option as it achieves the valuable objectives of preserving travel options along the State Route 99 corridor, enhancing livability in Downtown and other Seattle neighborhoods, opening up access to the waterfront, and increasing transit use.

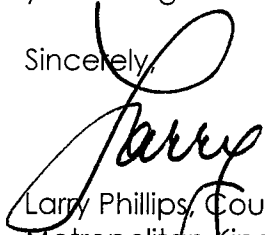
I do, however, wish to convey one serious concern that needs further attention: the lack of access to the bypass tunnel for northwest Seattle communities such as Ballard, Magnolia, and Interbay. About one-third of the vehicles that use the viaduct today get on or off at Elliott or Western Avenues, which under the current proposal would no longer directly connect to the bypass tunnel. These travelers are customers or owners of industrial and small businesses in Ballard and Interbay, as well as northwest Seattle residents, including the Ballard and Magnolia neighborhoods, who rely on the viaduct to take them swiftly through downtown to destinations south of Seattle.

As design and environmental review work advance on the bored tunnel and more detailed engineering information becomes available, I would request that your team continue to explore options for linking northwest Seattle communities to the bypass tunnel and optimizing through-traffic travel from the dense urban neighborhoods and important industrial areas of Ballard, Magnolia, and Interbay.

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Thank you for considering this input, and thank you again for your well-reasoned and foresighted decision to recommend a tunnel replacement for the viaduct. I commend your thoughtful and responsible decision on behalf of our citizens.

Sincerely,



Larry Phillips, Councilmember
Metropolitan King County Council, District Four



cc: The Honorable Ron Sims, King County Executive
The Honorable Greg Nickels, Seattle City Mayor
Paula Hammond, Secretary of Transportation, WSDOT
David Dye, Deputy Secretary of Transportation, WSDOT
Ron Paananen, Program Director, Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall
Replacement Project, WSDOT
Harold Taniguchi, Director, King County Department of Transportation
Ron Posthuma, Assistant Director, King County Department of Transportation
Grace Crunican, Director, Seattle Department of Transportation
Robert Powers, Deputy Director, Seattle Department of Transportation