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**From:** Van Ness, Kristy (Consultant)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 25, 2009 4:53 PM  
**To:** White, John; Greco, Theresa; Preedy, Matt; Paananen, Ron; Tobin, Victoria  
**Cc:** Grotefendt, Amy (Consultant); Lenz, KaDeena (Consultant)  
**Subject:** FW: SI eBulletin February 25, 2009

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**From:** Seattle Industry [mailto:seattleindustry@qwest.net]  
**Sent:** Wed 2/25/2009 4:03 PM  
**To:** Kristy Van Ness  
**Subject:** SI eBulletin February 25, 2009



## The Voice for Industry

February 25, 2009



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### Burn Down, Start Over



City of Seattle plans for two-way Mercer, a new

Spokane Street Viaduct and a deep bore tunnel to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct hit an unexpected barrier Tuesday when key leaders of the Washington State Legislature announced the list of road projects that will be funded from the state's share of the federal stimulus package.

The Mercer and Spokane projects weren't included. Governor Chris Gregoire said she will work with the city to find other funding sources, but the

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legislators' proposal could be a major blow to city efforts to raise money for the projects and the Mercer and Spokane Street improvements are necessary to support the deep bore tunnel plan. A public hearing on the legislative proposal will be held in Olympia Thursday.

The dust up appears to reveal yet one more example of how goofed up our state, region and city are when it comes to governance in the field of transportation.

The state legislators reportedly want to focus the stimulus funds on "state" road needs and left off the Seattle projects because Mercer and the Spokane Street Viaduct are "local" streets owned and operated by the city. Which they are.

But they also rank among the busiest thoroughfares in the state. As such, they are logical candidates for regional, state and even federal support. Then again, that assumes we have a logical governing system. And we don't.

Take the Alaskan Way Viaduct. The state owns the structure. The city owns the land beneath it. One strike against efforts to replace the viaduct with a new elevated structure is the city's threat to withhold building permits. The city also isn't bashful about exerting its local government power to install curb bulbs and other urban amenities on

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local streets, even when the local street is a truck route with regional or even state wide significance.

One notorious curb bulb protrudes into the Elliott Avenue on ramp to the south bound lanes of the Alaskan Way Viaduct near the Pike Place Market. The city installed the curb bulb for the safety and convenience of pedestrians who want to walk cross the entrance to the on ramp. The curb bulb was considered necessary even though the city provides a signalized cross walk about one block away.

The city insists curb bulbs do not impede traffic, but during the afternoon peak, cars and trucks back up as far as the eye can see along Elliott as every two or three vehicles are brought to a stop by pedestrians ambling across the opening to the on ramp.

A slew of blue ribbon commissions have advocated major reforms over the years to create better ways to plan, fund and manage transportation, but generations of elected leaders have opted for the status quo. It might seem like a good time to burn down the system and start over again, but we probably couldn't get the necessary permits from the fire department.

**Rotary Club of SODO**

**invites you to their  
OPEN HOUSE**



Rotary International is a service organization of business people with 33,000 clubs world-wide ([www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org)). Best known throughout the world for their campaign to eradicate polio everywhere on earth, your local Rotary Club of SODO is looking for good folks and good projects much closer to home.

The Rotary Club of SODO is a young club, chartered just 5 years ago, which has been busy doing good work in the neighborhood. Their projects have included; fundraising for the River City Skate Park in partnership with the South Park Neighborhood Association, providing dictionaries for every 3rd grade student at Concord Elementary in South Park, awarding the first scholarships for Aviation High School graduating seniors, participating in the SODO Business Association "clean sweep days," and in the YWCA Adopt-A-Family project each December.

By growing Club membership the Rotary Club of SODO can increase the number and impact of service projects in this community and world-wide. You are invited to learn more about Rotary and about another SODO-area jewel, the Sister Schools organization matching Western WA and Ugandan schools/orphanages.

*Please attend an Open House meeting on Friday, March 6, noon, in the Mezza Conference Room, 3rd floor, Starbucks Center. Lunch Provided.*



### **Congestion Around Port Terminals**

Seattle drivers may encounter traffic backups on arterial streets near entries to several waterfront terminals at the beginning of the work week, on March 2 and 3. Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) traffic managers anticipate the terminal sites with the greatest potential for traffic impacts are:

- \* Terminal 5 (in West Seattle off of SW Spokane Street),
- \* Terminal 18 (Harbor Island off of SW Spokane Street), and
- \* Terminal 46 (off of Alaskan Way S at S Atlantic Street).

### **Metro News**

SODO traffic disruptions will affect bus service.

The city of Seattle is beginning road improvement projects in the SODO area that will result in some reroutes, relocated bus stops, and delays for King County Metro Transit and Sound Transit express bus service for several months.

Work starts this week on

First Avenue South between South Horton Street and South Stacy Street. During this project, the Seattle Department of Transportation will be restricting traffic while rebuilding a section of First Avenue. The buses will remain on their regular routing, but there could be significant delays and bus stops could be temporarily closed at times.

Starting Monday, March 2, construction associated with the Spokane Street Viaduct/Fourth Avenue Ramp Project will result in reroutes for approximately 17 Metro and Sound Transit bus routes at South Spokane Street and the SODO Busway. The transit disruptions are expected to last through mid May.

#### Potential Service Cuts by Metro

The magnitude of potential cuts to bus service by King County Metro to its riders could be of a kind never seen before in this state said King County Executive Ron Sims. Metro may have to cut 20 percent of its service after word last week that sales tax projections continue to be undermined by the recession while rider demand for service soars.

King County Metro currently provides 3.5 million hours of service, which equals about half of all scheduled bus service

provided by all public agencies statewide combined. The \$100 million projected shortfall means Metro faces cuts of 800,000 to 1 million hours of service. If Metro has to cut service by the lesser amount, 800,000 hours, those cuts would equal a full year of bus service in Pierce County, a full year of service by Community Transit in Snohomish County, twice the service offered per year in Spokane and equal to all rail and bus service provided by Sound Transit.

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