



August 11, 2023

TO: Councilmembers Andrew J. Lewis, Teresa Mosqueda, Tammy Morales, Lisa Herbold, and Debora Juarez

CC: Councilmember Dan Strauss, Rico Quirindongo, Greg Spotts, Jacob Thorpe, Lish Whitson, Lyle Bicknell

RE: Comments on Draft Resolution 32100

Dear Chair Lewis and Members of the Seattle City Council Committee on Public Assets and Homelessness,

We are writing with enthusiastic support for Resolution 32100 which supports the development of lids across Interstate 5. The resolution is an important step in project development and policy.

We greatly appreciate your work on this legislation. We do have a few comments for minor additions and revisions that would strengthen this resolution. We ask that these be considered in time for the full Council to approve Resolution 32100 the second week of September, in order to support a federal grant application being pursued by OPCD.

- **Section 1.** Revise the mention of “Denny Way” as a northern boundary to “Thomas Street”, to equitably support low-income residents at the SHA Denny Terrace building.
- **Section 2.** Remove the word “intent” to show direct support for city departments advancing the project.
- **Section 2.A.** Include integration of citywide lid concepts in the ongoing updates to the Comprehensive Plan and the Parks and Open Space Plan
- **Section 2.D.** Clarify that freeway ramp analyses are collaborative with WSDOT.
- **New section.** Include I-5 lid planning and design in the 2024 transportation levy renewal.
- **Revise the “whereas” fact about WSDOT’s Revive I-5 project.** That work is not doing full replacement or seismic work to bridges, but is doing replacement of expansion joints.
- **Add to the “whereas” introductory facts:**
 - Parks policy 1.17 from the Comprehensive Plan also supports lids
 - WSDOT has or is building many lids over Interstate 90 and State Route 520.
 - The U.S. Congress has established an unprecedented \$4 billion program to fund freeway lids and similar work for reconnecting communities.
 - The new Downtown Activation Plan includes lidding I-5 as an opportunity for green space and climate resilience.
 - The Washington Legislature has funded an I-5 Master Plan. \$200,000 is set aside to Seattle OPCD for lid planning and WSDOT is conducting a full I-5 seismic study and ramp configuration study in Seattle.

By way of background, in 2020, the City of Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) published the [I-5 Lid Feasibility Study](#) which found that lidding more of I-5 in central Seattle is feasible and would create significant environmental, economic, and social benefits. This study was championed by Lid I-5, a volunteer community group working to

reconnect the city, reduce the environmental and health harms of the urban freeway canyon, and expand public land in our most densely populated and growing neighborhoods.

Resolution 32100 sends a clear signal to the public and our partners at the county, state, and federal levels that lidding I-5 is a major opportunity and priority of Seattle. We applaud that it includes not only the central Seattle segment already studied, but also supports a possible lid site in the University District and acknowledges the special considerations needed for the environmental injustices where I-5 slices through Chinatown-International District.



Figure 1 - Conceptual renderings of what lidding I-5 could look like in central Seattle with a mix of parks and development

Thank you for your time and attention to this visionary civic project. We appreciate the City Council's careful consideration of solutions that create improvements to safety, health, and access to opportunity for Seattleites as well as the beauty and health of our unique environment. We are available should you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Lid I-5 Steering Committee

Natalie Bicknell

Scott Bonjukian, co-chair

Jim Castanes

Michael Connolly

Liz Dunn

John Feit, co-chair

Bruno Lambert

Yinan Liu

Tina Morehead

Eliot Muetting

Tracy Patton

Katy Ricchiuto

Lid I-5 Coalition Partner Organizations

Seattle Parks Foundation

Allied Arts

American Institute of Architects – Seattle Chapter

Capitol Hill Ecodistrict

Central Seattle Greenways

Community Roots Housing

Downtown Seattle Association

First Hill Improvement Association

Futurewise

Freeway Park Association

Melrose Promenade

Meridian Condominium Homeowners Association

Northwest Progressive Institute

Parents for a Better Downtown Seattle

Pike/Pine Urban Neighborhood Council

The Urbanist

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