



July 8, 2009

Mr. Sean Ardussi  
Puget Sound Regional Council  
1011 Western Ave.  
Seattle, WA 98104-1035

Dear Mr. Ardussi:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Transportation 2040 Draft Environmental Statement. We appreciate the efforts of the PSRC to plan for what will be a dynamic time in transportation for our region.

The City of Kirkland applauds the bold direction and aggressive nature of Alternative 5 to alter travel behavior and land use patterns in the region through use of roadway pricing and tolling. However, we have some concerns:

- Our support of Alternative 5 does not imply endorsement of commuter rail in the BNSF corridor. The city has concerns about impacts which must be fully analyzed, reviewed and debated prior to a decision.
- We endorse aggressive near-term measures which yield a significant increase in bus boardings.
- The plan should more aggressively address carbon emission reductions.

While Kirkland's Roadway Pricing policy is supportive of broad tolling, we are concerned it is premature for the region to rely solely on tolling to pay for new capital improvements, while also being expected to address the funding shortfalls we already face in preserving our existing infrastructure. Instead, a mix of funding sources, combined with aggressive mode share goals, should be considered to also address identified shorter term needs. This would allow the additional time to help alter travel behavior and attitude towards such a fundamental change in transportation funding, and would avoid having some shorter term needs go unmet. It would be helpful if the Plan included a funding and implementation strategy that identified how the region would evolve over time from the current very limited tolling situations to tolling on many regional and local facilities.

We are also concerned that the general public, and federal and state policy makers, will have a difficult time setting a toll at a rate that will, by itself, cause drivers to shift from automobiles to other modes. Instead, the City of Kirkland supports an alternative that provides an improved mass-transit system that would be operational sooner than such a bold funding strategy identified in Alternative 5 would likely allow. We encourage you to identify an alternative very similar to Alternative 5 that will include investments in transit that can be implemented sooner. For example, Kirkland still relies on only a handful of local and regional bus routes as their sole transit option and need additional service and facilities to begin to change behavior. We are not able to wait for such a bold shift in transportation funding to take place before transit investments are made in our area.

We also support much more investment in a complete system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities that connect Urban Centers throughout the region as identified in Alternative 5.

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We believe, as identified in our Active Transportation Plan, that more investment is needed in our pedestrian and bicycle system to better promote healthy living, support increased transit usage, and shape the land use the region desires.

In addition, we noticed none of the alternatives identify what it would take to meet the greenhouse gas emission targets adopted by the City of Kirkland and other cities, in addition to those targets identified by the State of Washington. It would have been useful to evaluate and understand the type of policies and projects necessary to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions below 2005 levels.

Thank you for consideration of these comments. The next thirty years will offer not only challenges to our transportation system but exciting opportunities as well.

Sincerely,

Kirkland City Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James L. Lauinger", with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

By James L. Lauinger, Mayor