



Gregory J. Nickels
Mayor of Seattle

September 28, 2006

Dear City Councilmembers:

I'm writing to urge you to be thoughtful and deliberative before declaring a preferred alternative for replacing the State Route 520 Bridge.

While a six lane alternative may have transportation benefits to the city and the region, the state has not adequately analyzed the environmental impacts on Seattle's cherished Arboretum, the surrounding wetlands, neighborhoods or the University of Washington. Only when these conditions are fully understood and the state has confirmed its intent to provide appropriate mitigation should we make this decision.

In addition, when Gov. Christine Gregoire's Expert Review Panel issued its report four weeks ago, the panel noted quite strongly that a viable funding plan is not in place for the SR-520 project:

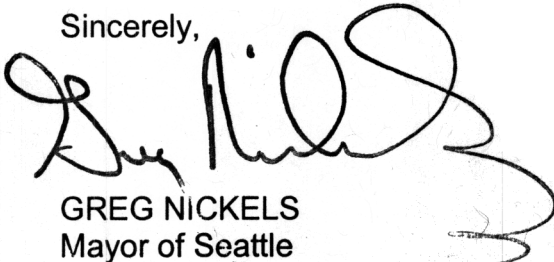
The amount of funding sources identified in the SR 520 finance plan fall far short in secured and anticipated funding categories.... Overall, we find it unreasonable to assume the project will realize sufficient funding from secured and anticipated funding sources.

The panel found the opposite to be true for the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project:

Moreover, we find that the Viaduct's overall finance plan provides a reasonable framework for funding the core project for either of the reviewed alternatives.

The public comment period continues through the end of October and the city should have the benefit of all that information as well as more work from the state about environmental impacts and mitigation before endorsing a preferred alternative by the end of this year.

Sincerely,



GREG NICKELS
Mayor of Seattle