



**Gregory J. Nickels**  
Mayor of Seattle

April 17, 2006

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

Dear Governor Gregoire:

Thank you for your interest and leadership in discussions with the Sonics about potential renovations for KeyArena. Our primary concern is that KeyArena remain a vibrant part of the Seattle Center after the Sonics' lease expires in 2010.

We believe sports, along with arts and cultural opportunities, is an important part of what makes Seattle a great city. And, as such, believe it is important to make reasonable efforts to keep our oldest major league sports franchise, our NBA Sonics, here in Seattle at the KeyArena.

We want to emphasize the principles that will guide the "reasonable efforts" to retain the Sonics/Storm. These principles reflect many of those articulated by you and the legislature:

- Any proposal for public funding of a KeyArena renovation must be submitted to the voters of King County for their approval. In addition, new revenue should be used to pay off the existing debt associated with the 1994 remodeling of KeyArena.
- There must be significant private investment by the Sonics/Storm and other businesses as partners in a renovation of KeyArena.
- The public funding share must come exclusively from "visitor" taxes or "user" taxes/fees, and not from local general public tax revenues (i.e. the General Fund).
- The "visitor/user" taxes or fees must be collected countywide in King County, not just in Seattle; KeyArena is a regional asset and we all benefit and should all pay.
- Funding for arts and heritage programs and facilities must be included in the state legislation.
- A new lease with the Sonics/Storm when their lease expires in 2010 must work for Seattle Center and the city, and have a term at least as long as the term of any debt issued for a remodeling of KeyArena.

- over -

**Office of the Mayor**

Seattle City Hall, 7th Floor, 600 Fourth Avenue, PO Box 94749, Seattle, WA 98124-4749  
Tel (206) 684-4000 • TDD (206) 615-0476 • Fax (206) 684-5360  
[www.seattle.gov/mayor](http://www.seattle.gov/mayor)

**Seattle City Council**

Seattle City Hall, 2nd Floor, 600 Fourth Avenue, PO Box 34025, Seattle, WA 98124-4025  
Tel (206) 684-8888 • TDD (206) 233-0025 • Fax (206) 684-8587

Finally, the public has already made a significant investment in KeyArena and we should not be duplicating that contribution by investing in similar facilities elsewhere in the region.

In the next couple of weeks, the City Council will consider a resolution outlining these principles and others to help lay a framework for the Mayor to negotiate a proposed lease with the Sonics/Storm. We will keep you apprised of these efforts accordingly.

Thank you again for your assistance in this matter. We are happy to work further on this together.

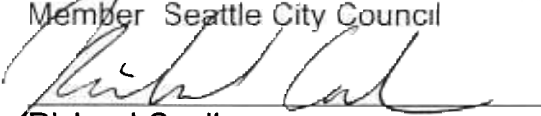
Sincerely,



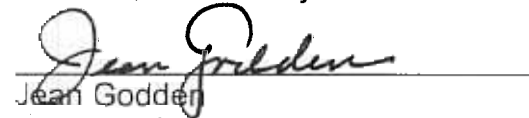
Greg Nickels  
Mayor of Seattle



Peter Steinbrueck  
Member, Seattle City Council



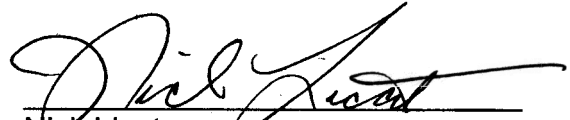
Richard Conlin  
Member, Seattle City Council



Jean Godder  
Member, Seattle City Council



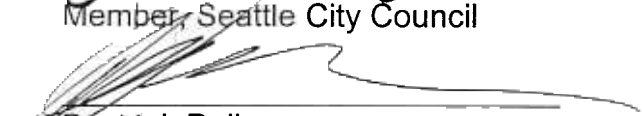
Sally J. Clark  
Member, Seattle City Council



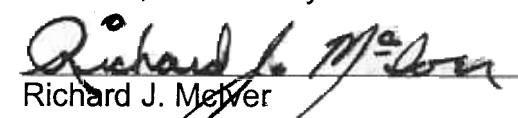
Nick Licata  
President, Seattle City Council



Jan Drago  
Member, Seattle City Council



David J. Della  
Member, Seattle City Council



Richard J. Melver  
Member, Seattle City Council



Tom Rasmussen  
Member, Seattle City Council