



City of Seattle

Seattle
Freight
Advisory
Board

To: Seattle City Councilmembers
Seattle City Hall
600 4th Ave, Floor 2
Seattle, WA 98104

July 13th, 2023

Dan Kelly (Chair)
Stanley Ryter (Co-Chair)
Geri Poor
Dan McKisson
Nigel Baron
Howard Agnew
Eric Wright
Dan Gatchet

Re: Seattle Freight Advisory Board Comments on Industrial Lands Legislation

Dear Councilmembers:

The Seattle Freight Advisory Board (SFAB) asks that the city council and mayor not allow housing in the Stadium Area Overlay District; further, we support the proposed Transportation Resolution to address the impacts that proposed projects will have in the area. The members of the SFAB are aware of the housing issues that our city faces and support building affordable housing where appropriate in the city. We are equally concerned about maintaining the ability to move products and goods on freight routes that service the city safely and efficiently, with minimal environmental impact to the city.

Land use issues that address housing also impact freight mobility through the city. The SFAB is very concerned about proposals for housing and an expanded entertainment district in the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District (STAOD). The industrial lands legislation that the council is considering has many positive protections for industrial lands in the city's MICs. Compromises were made in Georgetown and Ballard to up-zone for housing. With 2023 state legislation addressing multi-unit housing and other innovative solutions being proposed by the city, we have many positive options for urban housing that would not impact industrial lands and freight movement carrying the goods of our city, region, and country.

State Route 519 (SR519) and 1st Avenue South run through the heart of the STAOD. SR519 was built with millions of dollars of grants specifically for the movement of freight, yet unfortunately only 50% of the originally designed project was completed.

- SR519 is the most direct and efficient east-west connector to I-90 and I-5 for shippers to access the port and the BNSF's Seattle International Gateway (SIG) North Yard.
- 1st Ave between Atlantic and Holgate is designated on the city's Heavy Haul Network, which supports trucks carrying of heavy loads between the port and SODO transloading facilities.
- In addition, 1st Ave S and Massachusetts St is also an intersection that trucks use to deliver rail cargo to the BNSF SIG North Yard.

The success of the port and the SIG depend on the efficient movement of freight in and through the STAOD.

The Seattle Freight Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the City in development of a functional and efficient freight system and on all matters related to freight and the impact that actions by the City may have upon the freight environment.

City Council Resolution
31243

Currently the STAOD transportation system experiences stress during stadium events and train crossings. This causes heavy vehicle and pedestrian congestion on SR519 and 1st Ave S; delays and diverts freight movement; and adds miles, time and environmental impact to freight trips between the port, SIG and destinations through the multi-state region.

The proposal by Chris Hansen to develop his property in the STAOD with housing, hotels, restaurants, bars, and entertainment venues will add additional stress on the transportation system in the STAOD. Housing in the STAOD makes no sense, since there are no walkable support services that support residential uses--no groceries, no dry cleaners, no schools, no medical services, etc.--creating an automobile-dependent neighborhood if housing were to be included. Introducing more residents to the STAOD without major investment in mitigation and facilities, would put thousands of people-trips on to these Major Truck Streets.

The City of Seattle was built and thrived, as with many coastal cities, on the unique ability to operate a port that moves goods safely regionally—a gateway to the world. From its origins as a port and industrial activity, the ability to operate a world class port and move freight efficiently supports the city, its economic basis and thousands of family wage jobs. To maintain the viability of our port and industrial areas we must maintain our ability to move goods through our industrial areas, which includes the STAOD.

The SFAB asks that the city council and mayor not allow housing in the Stadium Area Overlay District. We support the proposed Transportation Resolution to address the impacts that proposed projects will have in the area. In addition, we urge that the city establish major freight routes as “Essential Public Facilities” so that freight can be moved through our city safely, efficiently and with minimal environmental impact.

Sincerely,



Dan Kelly
Seattle Freight Advisory Board Chair

CC:
Mayor Bruce Harrell
Rico Quirindongo, Director OPCD
Markham McIntyre, Director OED