CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Governor

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September 1, 2006

Doug MacDonald, Secretary
Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 47316
Olympia, WA 98504-7316

Dear Secretary ~~MacDonald~~ Doug:

I have reviewed the report and recommendations provided by the Expert Review Panel. I appreciate that the Panel recognized the strengths in the Washington State Department of Transportation's technical expertise for establishing cost estimates at this early stage. They were also complimentary regarding the project implementation plans including project management, permitting and design, and construction. The Panel also provided opportunities for improvement.

Based upon the recommendations, initially I would like the Department to complete the following tasks in the next couple of weeks.

1. Reevaluate the cost estimates for the SR 520 and Alaskan Way Viaduct project options and work with the Expert Review Panel to determine the accuracy of the updated cost estimates.
2. Develop a plan for implementing the Panel's recommendations.
3. Develop a communications plan that informs local governments, project stakeholders, and the public of the key decision points and data and information for both projects.
4. Work with the project financing partners, the Regional Transportation Investment District and the City of Seattle, to assure clear understanding of responsibilities and full funding of both projects.

The Panel's recommendations made it clear that there is not sufficient funding for the state's share of the SR 520 bridge replacement. As a result, I have asked Transportation Chairs Murray and Haugen to work with us to develop a plan for the state's share of financing the SR 520 project.

These projects must proceed in a timely manner and with sound management and financial plans. Public safety, congestion, and taxpayer's valuable dollars call for action. Delay is not an option. Thanks for providing valuable support and expertise to move us forward.

Sincerely,

Chris

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor