

CITY OF SEATTLE
RESOLUTION _____

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3 A RESOLUTION relating to the State Route 520, Interstate 5 to Medina Bridge Replacement
4 and High Occupancy Vehicle Project; recognizing the completion of a technical report on
5 the conditions under which the Washington State Department of Transportation should
6 consider building a second bascule bridge over the Montlake Cut, and making
7 recommendations on actions to be taken by the State and the City based on the findings
8 of the report.

9 WHEREAS, in an April 2010 letter to the Governor of Washington and the Secretary of the State
10 Department of Transportation, the City Council stated its reservations about the potential
11 construction of a second Montlake bascule bridge; asked the State to phase the decision
12 on construction of this bridge and test measures to eliminate the need for the bridge;
13 stated that the Council would consider supporting the construction of this bridge only if
14 the bridge would be used to provide dedicated capacity for high occupancy vehicles,
15 transit, bicyclists and pedestrians; and stated that the Council did not support the creation
16 of additional roadway capacity along Montlake Boulevard for single occupant vehicles
17 and other general purpose traffic; and

18 WHEREAS, Ordinance 123733, passed in October 2011, authorized execution of a
19 memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the State of Washington and the City of
20 Seattle related to the State Route (SR) 520, Interstate 5 to Medina Bridge Replacement
21 and High Occupancy Vehicle Project, and that MOU was executed; and

22 WHEREAS, the MOU stated the intent of the State and the City to collaborate in deciding
23 whether and when to build a second Montlake bascule bridge, taking into consideration
24 transit travel time, reliability and passenger delay, levels of service for pedestrians and
25 bicycles, SR 520 mainline operations and other appropriate factors; and

26 WHEREAS, pursuant to that provision of the MOU the State and the City convened a technical
27 workgroup, also involving King County Metro Transit, to conduct a detailed inquiry into
28 the present and expected future performance of the transportation system in the vicinity
of the existing Montlake Bridge related to those considerations and to identify triggers for
levels of performance that could be used to analyze the need to build a second bridge; and

WHEREAS, those discussions have yielded a technical report titled Establishment of Triggers,
Second Montlake Bridge Workgroup that set thresholds for levels of performance in
pedestrian and bicycle mobility, transit speed and reliability and SR 520 mainline
operations that would trigger consideration of the construction of a second bridge; and

NOW, THEREFORE,

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2 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE**
3 **MAYOR CONCURRING, THAT:**

4 Section 1. The main findings of the technical report titled Establishment of Triggers,
5 Second Montlake Bridge Workgroup are these:

6 A. Current levels of service for bicyclists and pedestrians over the existing Montlake
7 Bridge approach, and at times exceed, thresholds defined as adequate by current City policy and
8 triggers for action identified in the technical report. In the future, the poor conditions are likely to
9 increase. This indicates that action within the next five years is appropriate to address the
10 capacity limitation for pedestrian and bicycles on the current bridge.

11 B. Current transit operating conditions in the 2.5 mile corridor containing the Montlake
12 Bridge either approach or fail to meet the City's standards for transit travel time and reliability
13 adopted in the Seattle Transit Master Plan. However, the bridge is only one potential source of
14 delay in the corridor and is not the sole factor in creating transit delay or increasing transit time.
15 The report also indicates that future conditions, such as the implementation of light rail transit in
16 the SR 520 corridor, could affect how people travel, indicating the need for continued monitoring
17 of travel conditions into the future.

18 C. Mainline operations on SR 520 are affected by the Montlake Bridge only when the
19 bridge opens for marine traffic and queues form on SR 520 off-ramps. Since the bridge does not
20 open during peak hours, it does not affect mainline operations during those times. Because a
21 second bridge would open for marine traffic simultaneously, it would improve these conditions
22 only marginally.

23 Section 2. Based on a review of the technical report the City requests and recommends
24 the following actions:

25 A. Notwithstanding the importance of generally improving levels of transportation
26 performance for bicyclists and pedestrians in the city, the improvements in these made by a

1 second Montlake bridge are unlikely to yield benefits that justify the cost and environmental
2 impact of a bridge. The development of the City's Bicycle Master Plan, currently in process, is
3 the appropriate forum for developing more cost-effective options to improve service for
4 bicyclists and pedestrians over the Montlake Cut. The City requests that the Seattle Department
5 of Transportation (SDOT) working with the Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board develop options for
6 consideration in the Bicycle Master Plan and develop and implement improved methods of
7 monitoring transportation performance for bicyclists and pedestrians in the vicinity of the
8 Montlake Bridge so that the Bicycle Master Plan will be well informed.

9 B. Consistent with the City's Transit Master Plan, improving transit reliability and travel
10 time in the 2.5 mile corridor including the Montlake Bridge is a high priority. It appears that a
11 second Montlake Bridge by itself would have little impact in addressing current adverse transit
12 operating conditions in the corridor, but that other potential transit projects in the corridor (such
13 as queue jumps and dedicated bus lanes) may improve conditions and be more cost effective than
14 constructing a second Montlake Bridge. The City requests that SDOT work with King County
15 Metro and WSDOT to identify and implement other improvements in the corridor and monitor
16 the effects of these improvements. The City recommends that the State consider funding these
17 transit improvements in the corridor as soon as is practical.

18 C. It is likely that the benefits of any improvements in mainline SR 520 operations from a
19 second Montlake bridge would be small in comparison to the cost and impact of a second bridge.
20 In addition, many other changes related to SR 520, including roadway infrastructure
21 improvements, reconstruction of the Montlake interchange, tolling on SR 520, the
22 implementation of Sound Transit Link projects and improved cross-lake transit service, are likely
23 to impact traffic volume and flow in the Montlake area, making the benefits of a second bridge to
24 mainline SR 520 operations uncertain. The City requests that SDOT cooperate with the State in
25 monitoring the effect of bridge openings on mainline SR 520 operations and determining
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1 whether these bridge openings meet the trigger defined in the technical report once these other
2 changes have been made.

3 D. Taking current bicycle, pedestrian, and transit performance and mainline SR520
4 operations into account, it is likely that a second Montlake bascule bridge would not deliver
5 benefits (particularly to pedestrian, bicycle, and bus transit mobility) that justify its cost and
6 impact. It is also likely that equal or greater improvements in performance for bicyclists,
7 pedestrians and transit customers could be otherwise delivered at lower cost. Accordingly, the
8 City's recommendation to WSDOT and the State Legislature is that a second Montlake bascule
9 bridge not be constructed within the foreseeable future. WSDOT and SDOT should continue to
10 monitor the triggers identified and recommended in the technical report titled Establishment of
11 Triggers, Second Montlake Bridge workgroup, to ascertain if a second bridge would be
12 warranted at some future date based on changes in conditions including, but not limited to,
13 consideration of light rail transit in the SR 520 corridor. If changed conditions suggest that
14 constructing a second Montlake Bridge should be considered, then a joint-decision making
15 process between the City and the State should be established that includes community and
16 neighborhood outreach and input.

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20 Adopted by the City Council the ____ day of _____, 2012, and
21 signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day
22 of _____, 2012.

23 _____
24 President _____ of the City Council

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THE MAYOR CONCURRING:

Michael McGinn, Mayor

Filed by me this ____ day of _____, 2012.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)