

June 18, 2015

Ms. Kate Martin
Campaign Director
Initiative 123
1427 Western Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: Initiative 123

Dear Ms. Martin:

It has come to our attention from our supporters all across the City of Seattle that your paid signature gatherers are appropriating facts and information about the City's Waterfront Seattle project (known for five years as a "Waterfront for All" to the public) in support of Initiative 123 in ways that potentially violate laws regulating initiative petitions. Please cease this conduct or we may be forced to take further action to avoid confusion and misleading of the public.

Waterfront Seattle, the City project currently underway on the central waterfront beginning with a new seawall and culminating in a 26 block park and public open space, was developed over the course of the last five years with an enormous amount of public input that has been included in the design. On the basis of public input, the City Council and the Mayor unanimously approved the 2012 Strategic Plan for the design, funding, and long term stewardship (See: http://waterfrontseattle.org/Media/Default/images/design/07122012_CWC_Strategic_Plan_Final_Web_Version.pdf). Much of this plan has been implemented or is underway. Friends of Waterfront Seattle (Friends) was created pursuant to that plan to be the non-profit partner to engage the public, raise capital funds for the project from philanthropic sources, and to partner with the City on the long term stewardship of the public park.

Since 2011, outreach for Waterfront Seattle has included:

- Over 400 public meetings, reaching over 15,000 people, generating more than 9,000 comments that were considered in creating the design
- Four large design-focused events drew an average attendance of 900 people each
- Surveys soliciting community input were conducted in 14 different neighborhoods across the city

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- Meetings were held with diverse constituencies from neighborhood groups to minority communities and business leaders to subsistence Cambodian, Mien, Hmong and Lao fishermen

A recent city council district level poll of likely November 2015 voters conducted by EMC Research and commissioned by Friends revealed that 85% of likely voters support the City's "Waterfront for All" plan for a public park with green space, walking and bike paths along the central shoreline. An overwhelming majority of voters in every district see themselves using the park (see attached summary). It is unlikely that public support at this level exists for an initiative that is in reality a real estate development project masquerading as a park.

While using the City's language "Waterfront For All" as its title, Initiative 123 would require the creation of a Public Development Authority known as the "Downtown Waterfront Preservation & Development Authority" (DWPDA) which would have authority to proceed with private commercial real estate developments on the north and south of the central waterfront, in addition to re-building a viaduct-like structure to house a park. This entity could also obtain control over all unused and underused or surplus public property within the City of Seattle. Initiative 123 is wildly at odds with the City's "Waterfront For All" which was inspired by citizen input over five years and would maintain the central shoreline for the benefit of the public without private commercial development as part of its plan. Initiative 123 misrepresents its proposal and the City's plan by using "Waterfront for All" language.

Specific concerns with the initiative petition itself are highlighted below:

- The initiative is vague, confusing and attempts to hijack the City's waterfront park project, now five years in the making. Initiative signature gatherers are deceiving voters into believing they are signing a petition that involves implementation of the City's current "Waterfront for All" project, which enjoys broad public support, rather than the initiative you propose, which the public has had no involvement in developing, contemplates private commercial development as part of its plan, and is backed by Martin Selig.
- Article II of the Initiative proposes "anchor real estate developments at the north and south ends of the park," a level of private development not envisioned as part of the existing City plan, potentially compromising space available to be open to the public and possibly turning over public land to private uses.



- Ignoring other City priorities, the initiative requires the City to make unlimited funds available from any source to pay for a largely undefined project without contribution from nearby property owners who would see an increase in property values. Unlike the City's own Waterfront for All project, Initiative 123 does not contemplate a local improvement district under which benefited property owners would pay for a share of project costs, along with diversified funding from sources outside of the City general fund.
- The entity formed pursuant to the Initiative to undertake the project and control waterfront public property is governed by an unelected board, not the City Council. This is a dangerous parallel to the failed monorail project which also involved something large looming overhead in the air with a similarly unaccountable board.
- The initiative trumps other priorities for use of surplus city land, namely affordable housing, by providing "real or other property held by any public agency within the city limits of Seattle which is unused, under-used or surplus, be made available to DWPDA, and such property shall be made available to DWPDA without charge if there is no legal prohibition" (Article V, section 24). This would also allow a small, unelected group to control all unused and underused City owned property.
- One fundamental premise of the City's real Waterfront for All project is to remove a massive concrete barrier separating the city from its waterfront in order to make the central shoreline accessible to the public. This initiative just replaces the existing barrier with another one.
- An elevated structure that houses a park will be unable to provide the significant environmental benefits in treating stormwater runoff and bio-filtration that the current park design provides. Environmental restoration and enhancement is a key element of the City's plan for a park along the central shoreline, already underway with the seawall construction which is increasing salmon habitat. It is contrary to our values as a City to squander this once in a generation environmental opportunity in favor of bringing back more concrete and rebar along the central waterfront as Initiative 123 would do.
- The initiative ignores the fact that significant public investment has already been made in the City's waterfront plan which is moving forward with construction of the seawall and the Pike Place Market expansion. The new MarketFront entrance is breaking ground this month to connect the Market to the waterfront based on current park design, and will ultimately connect the Pike Place Market to the waterfront park via an elevated park. The Seattle Aquarium is expanding by 70% in coordination with the current design for the waterfront park.



A lot of time, money, and real work has been invested to create and implement a great public project which reflects what the community wants. Your efforts are effectively contravening the will of the people who made it indelibly clear throughout five years of public input that private commercial real estate development was not welcome on a newly imagined waterfront.

Best regards,

FRIENDS OF WATERFRONT SEATTLE, BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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		David Wu

Attachment

cc/att: The Honorable Edward B. Murray, Mayor, City of Seattle
Members of the Seattle City Council
Members of the Central Waterfront Steering Committee
Marshall Foster, Director, Seattle Office of the Waterfront
Scott Kubly, Director, Seattle Department of Transportation
Jesús Aguirre, Superintendent, Seattle Parks Department
Diane Sugimura, Director, Seattle Planning and Development
Brian Surratt, Director, Seattle Office of Economic Development
Thatcher Bailey, Executive Director, Seattle Parks Foundation
Bob Davidson, President & CEO, Seattle Aquarium
Bob Donegan, Director, Seattle Historic Waterfront Association
Ben Franz-Knight, Executive Director, Pike Place Market PDA
Wren McNally, Interim Executive Director, Chinatown ID Business Improvement Area
Jon Scholes, President & CEO, Downtown Seattle Association
Leslie Smith, Executive Director, Alliance for Pioneer Square





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614.268.1660

610 SW Alder Street
Suite 521
Portland, OR 97205
503.444.6000

EMCresearch.com

FR: EMC Research
TO: Friends of Waterfront Seattle
DT: March 2015
RE: Summary of Polling Results

Methodology

This memo is based on a telephone survey of 700 likely November 2015 general election voters in the City of Seattle conducted by EMC Research in March of 2015. The margin of error for the results is ± 3.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence interval.

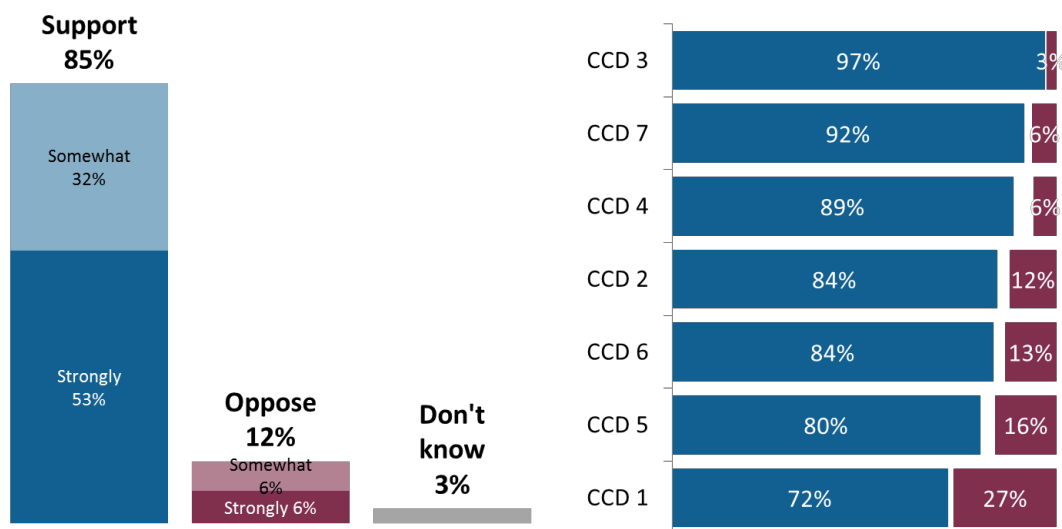
Summary

Voters overwhelmingly support the City's waterfront park plan, they see this specific project as an asset for the entire city, and most say they are likely to visit the park when it is complete.

Detailed Findings

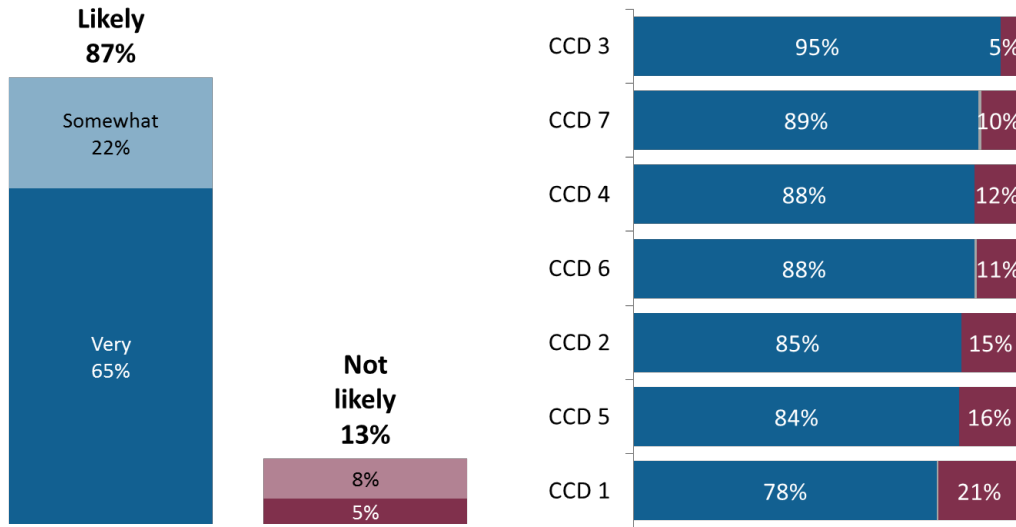
Voters overwhelmingly support the City's waterfront park plan (85% Support). Support is extremely strong in every city council district and voters support the project without any persuasion messaging.

- More than eight-in-ten likely voters (85%) support the City's plans "to create a new 26 block waterfront park and public space with picnic areas and bike and walking paths that will re-connect our waterfront to the city, restore critical natural beach habitat, and open access to Elliott Bay." Opposition is extremely low (12%).
- 72% or more in every city council district support the plan.



Q. The plan is to create a new 26 block waterfront park and public space with picnic areas and bike and walking paths that will re-connect our waterfront to the city, restore critical natural beach habitat, and open access to Elliott Bay. Knowing this, in general, do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose this plan for a waterfront park and public space?

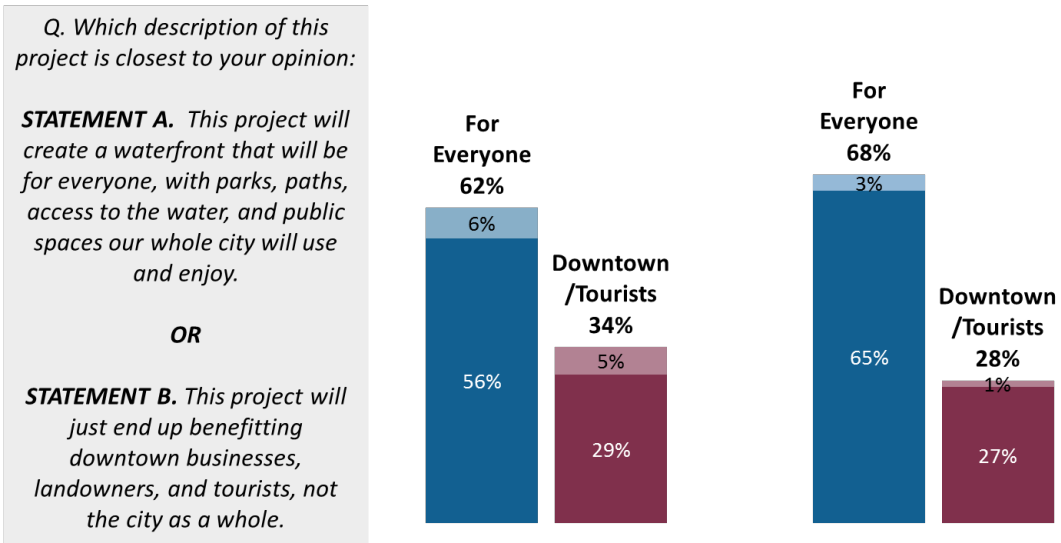
Almost all voters (87%) say they are likely to visit the new waterfront park. An overwhelming majority of voters in every city council district say they are likely to visit.



Q. How likely do you think you would be to visit this new waterfront park and public space? Would you say you would be very likely, somewhat likely, not that likely or not at all likely to visit the new waterfront park and public space?

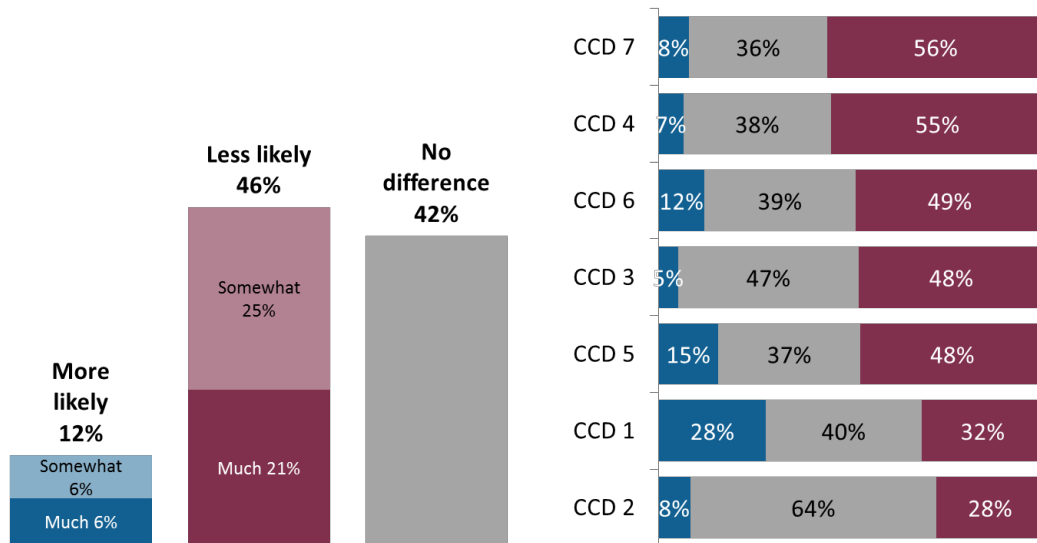
Voters continue to believe this project will create a waterfront that will be for everyone, rather than just for tourists and downtown interests, and that belief has grown since 2012.

- By a 40-point margin, voters believe this project will create a waterfront that "our whole city will use and enjoy" rather than a waterfront "benefitting downtown businesses, landowners, and tourists."



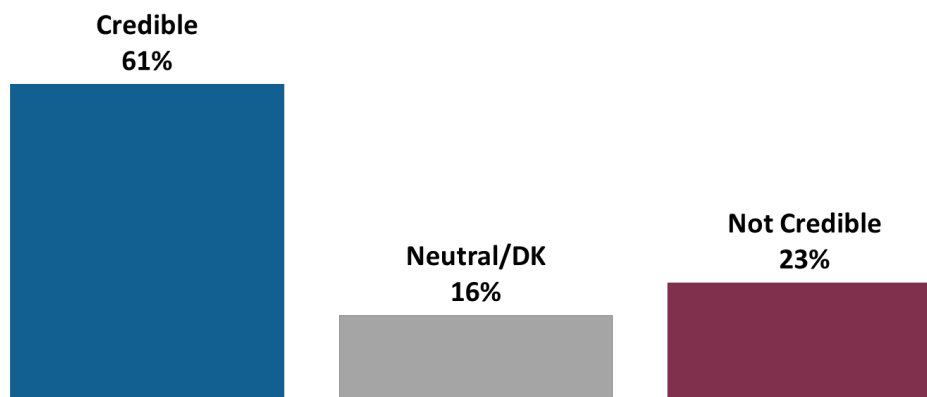
Voters want city council candidates to support this project.

- Citywide, almost half of likely November 2015 voters say they would be **less likely** to support a city council candidate who opposes the project – only 12% say they would be more likely to support an anti-waterfront park candidate.



Q. If a candidate for city council in your district came out **against** this plan for a waterfront park, would you be more likely or less likely to support that candidate or would it not really make a difference one way or the other?

Mayor Ed Murray is seen as highly credible on the issue of a new waterfront park and public space.



Q. On a scale from one to seven where one is not at all credible and seven is very credible, how credible do you think Mayor Ed Murray is on this issue. You can use any number from one to seven.