



Seattle Arena Information Prepared by Sonicsgate 04.24.2016

Honorable Seattle Councilmembers and Citizens of Seattle:

We've compiled the following information for your consideration before the upcoming Occidental Avenue Street Vacation Vote. The current issue before the Council is the Occidental Ave Street Vacation. The Council will have additional opportunities to evaluate the virtues of the full Arena MOU later in the process, and members will be able to debate specifics and propose any amendments before the final deal is approved. The MOU's merits are extremely strong,^{1,2} but this first Council vote is a basic land use decision regarding the Occidental Ave Street Vacation.³

Multiple precedents exist for street vacation approval in Seattle, with more than 65 being granted in SoDo alone.^{4,5} The Mariners' 1999 Occidental Avenue Street Vacation had fewer obstacles to approval.⁶ The Seattle Arena MOU provides for a significant increase in the use of private financing dollars used for public infrastructure benefits than the Safeco Field proposal.⁷ Per an MOU amendment, Chris Hansen would pay "fair market value" to the city for the 40,000 square feet being vacated on Occidental Avenue in addition to the array of public arena benefits.⁸

Safeco and CenturyLink Fields were built using public dollars from the Tourism Sales Tax increase.⁹ While the city benefits from having these two large sports stadia, and the taxes retired early after being paid off,¹⁰ their hundreds of millions in public funding was controversial in Seattle, and much of the bad PR directed at future arena proposals has come as a result of those past deals, not the true factual merits of the Seattle Arena MOU.¹¹

Contrary to Safeco and CenturyLink Fields, the Seattle Arena proposal is not using any new tax dollars or revenue streams that could be used elsewhere. The SoDo Arena financing is self-contained, with \$200 million in public bonding capacity that will be repaid in its entirety from revenue streams generated exclusively within the arena. Chris Hansen's group guarantees any shortfalls with private dollars, including any cost overruns and maintenance.¹² The users of the arena will pay for it with no risk to the public coffers. This sustainable funding model with private revenue guarantees makes Hansen's proposal a unique opportunity to bring a true multi-purpose venue that will complete the infrastructure of Seattle's Stadium Overlay District,¹³ and the Seattle Arena MOU is "the most closely and publicly vetted deal of its kind in Seattle's history."^{14,15,16}

The primary opponents of the Seattle Arena are the Port of Seattle, the ILWU, the Seattle Mariners and the owners of The Seattle Times. Faced with an absolute lack of data to oppose the arena in the face of the Arena Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS),¹⁷ SDOT recommendation¹⁸ and four years of exhaustive study on the arena's impact, opponents have scrambled to find any ground to stand on in their transparent territory war.¹⁹

¹ <http://www.kingcounty.gov/council/issues/arena.aspx>

² <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/201203882wILAMOUaspassedbyBFM20121009.pdf>

³ <http://www.king5.com/news/local/seattle/committee-approves-arena-street-vacation/143696697>

⁴ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Sodo-Street-Vacations-image.jpg>

⁵ <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/streetvacations.htm>

⁶ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Safeco-Field-Vacation-Conditions.jpg>

⁷ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Arena-Presentation-41916.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.king5.com/news/local/seattle-arena-finality-looms-yet-uncertainty-remains/145777329?C=>

⁹ <http://www.ballpark.org/finance.aspx>

¹⁰ <http://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/safeco-field-taxes-in-with-a-bang-out-with-a-whimper/>

¹¹ <http://www.sonicrising.com/2016/3/22/11284436/the-public-benefits-of-seattle-arena>

¹² <http://www.sonicrising.com/2016/3/22/11284436/the-public-benefits-of-seattle-arena>

¹³ http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p1903793.pdf

¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/ChrisDaniels5/status/716020657994219520>

¹⁵ <http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/news/2016/03/31/former-mayor-mike-mcginns-defends-sodo-arena-deal.html>

¹⁶ <http://kioradio.com/listen/10005030/>

¹⁷ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/SeattleArenaFEIS.pdf>

¹⁸ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Occidental-Ave-S-Arena-Final-Recommendation-v8.pdf>

¹⁹ <http://www.sonicrising.com/2015/12/4/9849528/blethen-tweet-points-to-one-sided-seattle-time-investigation>



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Arena opponents have engaged in an unethical disinformation campaign relying on distraction tactics, fear-mongering manipulation, factual errors and reinforcement of public misconceptions about the Seattle Arena MOU.^{20 21 22} They have no data proving their outrageous claims, and they are throwing stones at an arena plan the voting public wants while sitting in vulnerable glass houses themselves.

The Port of Seattle receives a public subsidy exceeding \$80 million annually²³ through its property tax levy. The Mariners received \$384 million in public taxes²⁴ for Safeco field, as well as a separate Occidental Avenue Street Vacation, with significantly fewer requirements for community benefit than Seattle Arena is providing.^{25 26}

The Port of Seattle is constantly asking for additional publicly subsidized infrastructure for its own financial gain, including the Heavy Haul Corridor²⁷ granted by the Council in 2015.²⁸ The Port of Seattle has received 32 street vacations itself,²⁹ and its opposition to the Occidental Avenue Street Vacation is a form of protest demanding another taxpayer handout, namely the Lander Street Overpass. Regardless of whether larger funding for the long awaited Lander Street Overpass is approved,³⁰ the Port should back down in its opposition to Seattle Arena.³¹

The Port of Seattle announced it will spend \$250,000 on messaging campaigns,³² essentially an anti-arena disinformation slush fund disguised as a “Middle Class Jobs Campaign” using taxpayer dollars. The Port also spent a small fortune fighting against the \$15/hour minimum wage at the airport.³³ The fact that the Port and the Mariners are spending public tax dollars on propaganda to defeat the arena demonstrates ludicrous hypocrisy and disrespect to the citizens of Seattle.^{34 35 36}

The Port of Seattle is going through all this trouble and public expense to messily mark its territory and demand yet another public handout.³⁷ The Port’s contention that to protect jobs it must keep one block of Occidental Avenue, a rundown back alley that handles virtually zero freight traffic,^{38 39} is insulting to the intelligence of the Councilmembers and the general public.⁴⁰ The Port faces legitimate challenges having to do with increased automation,⁴¹ competition from the Port of Tacoma⁴² and the widening of the Panama Canal,⁴³ but none of these factors mean that Port jobs hinge on this block of Occidental Avenue or traffic from evening arena events.^{44 45}

²⁰ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-admin/upload.php?item=271>

²¹ <http://www.king5.com/news/seattle-councilmembers-rip-times-reporting-arena-studies/65534974>

²² <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2016-02-22-Key-Arena-Seattle-Times-Memo.pdf>

²³ <http://www.seattlepi.com/local/article/Port-of-Seattle-s-use-of-tax-money-rapped-in-1304754.php>

²⁴ <http://www.thestranger.com/seattle/why-seattle-needs-a-stupid-new-sports-arena/Content?oid=12735183>

²⁵ http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/160104_Arena_SeattleCommunityReport-pg2_01.pdf

²⁶ <http://www.sonicrising.com/2016/3/22/11284436/the-public-benefits-of-seattle-arena>

²⁷ <http://murray.seattle.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Proposed-HHC-MAP-2015-9-3.pdf>

²⁸ <http://murray.seattle.gov/mayor-applauds-council-passage-of-heavy-haul-legislation/#sthash.3Rfis6cv.dpbs>

²⁹ <http://www.king5.com/news/local/seattle-arena-finality-looms-yet-uncertainty-remains/14577329?C=n>

³⁰ <http://sccinsight.com/2016/04/15/city-applies-federal-grant-lander-street-overpass/>

³¹ <http://sportspressnw.com/2217059/2016/sodo-arena-solution-gets-back-to-lander-fly-over>

³² <http://legacy.king5.com/story/news/local/seattle/2016/03/18/port-seattle-pay-close-250000-messaging-campaigns/81983032/>

³³ <http://www.realchangenews.org/2015/08/26/fifteen-dollar-minimum-wage-lands-sea-tac>

³⁴ <http://community.seattletimes.nwsourc.com/archive/?date=19941230&sluq=1949890>

³⁵ <http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/news/2015/11/13/ports-of-tacoma-and-seattle-to-gang-up-in-bid-to.html>

³⁶ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/2009-MuniLeague-Port-Report.pdf>

³⁷ <http://www.sonicrising.com/2016/4/18/11452588/the-murky-waters-of-the-port-of-seattle>

³⁸ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGYks_jlD3Y

³⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jvPQONv0xXg>

⁴⁰ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Port-Seattle-Terminal-46.docx>

⁴¹ http://www.ioc.com/port-news/port-productivity/us-ports-weigh-value-terminal-automation-investment_20141002.html

⁴² <http://www.seattletimes.com/subscribe/offers/?pw=redirect&subsource=paywall>

⁴³ <http://www.businessexaminer.com/blog/April-2016/NW-ports-threatened-by-Panama-expansion/>

⁴⁴ <http://www.seattletimes.com/articles/2012/8/8/port-arena-analysis-lacks-data-details>

⁴⁵ http://o.seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2018755928_porttraffic24m.html



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The Seattle Times has claimed that KeyArena is a viable alternative site, which has been proven false by studies of KeyArena's footprint limitations, extensive load-in and parking deficiencies, severe lack of neighborhood traffic infrastructure,^{46 47} and the fact that no investor has been willing to fund such improvements. Fixing these myriad KeyArena issues was assessed at a minimum of \$200 million public participation and \$300 million total cost back in 2008 dollars, which would amount to significantly more cost in today's dollars.^{48 49}

KeyArena has been thoroughly disqualified as a feasible alternative site plan by any legitimate measure, especially considering its traffic infrastructure that is decades away from being viable.⁵⁰
^{51 52} The Seattle Arena MOU actually includes \$7 million in private funds dedicated to permanent improvements for KeyArena that will help provide its long-term future. To date, this is the only private money that has been pledged toward renovating KeyArena,⁵³ and The Seattle Times has been thoroughly discredited in its attempts to cloud the issue using the AECOM report that amounts to "smoke and mirrors."^{54 55 56 57}

In addition to hundreds of millions in private funding for Seattle Arena construction, Mr. Hansen has pledged an additional \$40 million to a publicly managed SoDo Transportation & Infrastructure Fund for the area.⁵⁸ These private dollars will help to improve freight mobility and move Seattle's Master Transit and Pedestrian Plan^{59 60} forward for a walkable, bikeable city featuring the state's nexus of transportation infrastructure and the currently underutilized SoDo Light Rail Station.⁶¹

Seattle Arena will not displace any existing industrial tenants.⁶² The Port of Seattle and ILWU's claims of job losses are pure fiction based on zero data. Port of Seattle operations at Terminal 46 end at 4:20pm, several hours before the typical 7:00pm arena event time.⁶³ Hansen's properties are not a threat to the Port's freight operations,⁶⁴ its Heavy Haul Corridor or the industrial property west of 1st Avenue South.⁶⁵

Mr. Hansen has entered into Labor Peace Agreements with a coalition of unions to make sure arena workers are paid a living wage and everyone gets their fair share.⁶⁶ Union support for Seattle Arena includes UNITEHERE Local 8, Service Employees International Union Local 6, and Teamsters Local 117.^{67 68 69}

⁴⁶ <http://www.sonicsrising.com/2016/3/29/11322576/light-rail-to-key-arena-in-2038>

⁴⁷ <http://seattletransitblog.com/2016/03/24/st3-draft-plan-overview/>

⁴⁸ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/E-KeyArenaSubcommitteeFinalReportExecutiveSummary.pdf>

⁴⁹ <http://www.seattletimes.com/subscribe/offers/?pw=redirect&subsource=paywall>

⁵⁰ <http://sportspressnw.com/2215368/2016/thiel-stop-with-the-keyarena-remodel-talk>

⁵¹ <http://www.sonicsrising.com/2016/3/29/11322576/light-rail-to-key-arena-in-2038>

⁵² <http://www.sonicsrising.com/2016/4/22/11485426/seattle-arena-sally-bagshaw-ignores-her-own-key-to-the-key>

⁵³ <http://www.sonicsrising.com/2016/3/22/11277402/seattle-arena-public-benefits>

⁵⁴ <http://www.sonicsrising.com/2016/2/16/11004464/geoff-bakers-key-arena-remodel-fantasies-nba-nhl-seattle>

⁵⁵ <http://www.sonicsrising.com/2015/11/18/9754636/seattle-times-credibility-story-discredited-arena>

⁵⁶ <http://www.sonicsrising.com/2016/3/15/11236934/former-seattle-center-exec-aecom-report-on-keyarena-remodel-is-smoke>

⁵⁷ <http://www.seattleweekly.com/home/963218-129/whos-winning-the-great-city-hall-seattle>

⁵⁸ <http://www.sonicsrising.com/2016/3/22/11284436/the-public-benefits-of-seattle-arena>

⁵⁹ <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/transitmasterplan.htm>

⁶⁰ http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/pedestrian_masterplan/

⁶¹ http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/parking/lrp_stadium.htm

⁶² <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Arena-Tenant-Roster.pdf>

⁶³ <http://legacy.king5.com/story/news/local/seattle/2014/08/03/13150586/>

⁶⁴ <http://sccinsight.com/2016/04/05/sodo-arena-sdot-vs-port-seattle-throwdown/>

⁶⁵ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Hansen-Property-Map.png>

⁶⁶ <http://www.sonicsrising.com/2016/3/28/11318646/seattle-arena-public-benefits-3-labor-peace-sustainability-non-relocation>

⁶⁷ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/UNITEHERE.pdf>

⁶⁸ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/?p=364>

⁶⁹ <http://www.sonicsrising.com/2016/3/28/11318646/seattle-arena-public-benefits-3-labor-peace-sustainability-non-relocation>



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The ILWU has drawn harsh criticism, lawsuits and protests for its corrupt pay practices and discrimination against persons of color in the past.^{70 71 72 73 74 75 76} By contrast, the Seattle Arena MOU contains specific requirements to engage and support local minority workers and businesses that have been historically disenfranchised.⁷⁷

Despite its forceful, hollow claims of SoDo traffic impact and lost jobs, a public information request revealed that the Port wanted to move 800 employees to a new building in the neighborhood,⁷⁸ blatantly contradicting its own statements about traffic impact on its operations. The Port of Seattle has unclean hands when it comes to anti-arena messaging campaigns funded with taxpayer dollars, having also been busted about dishonestly hiring Pete Steinbrueck to lobby against the arena^{79 80} and lying about lost jobs to scare its union membership.^{81 82 83 84}

Despite The Seattle Times owners aligning with arena opponents and running a constant stream of anti-arena propoganda articles and editorials, 93% of its own readers want the Occidental Avenue Street Vacation Approved.⁸⁵

Arena supporters are not limited to basketball and hockey fans. Arena supporters are an organized section of the voting population that will mobilize heavily in future election cycles.⁸⁶

Thank you for your time and consideration of all the facts on this issue. Please act on the will of the people and do what's best for the citizens of Seattle. Vote to approve the Occidental Avenue Street Vacation and be on the right side of history.

We are available for meetings and discussions. Please email info@sonicsgate.com.



⁷⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byv2uhOdHh8>

⁷¹ <http://longshore-labor-relations.com/?p=1595>

⁷² <http://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-9th-circuit/1455808.html>

⁷³ <https://blackorchidcollective.wordpress.com/2012/01/19/an-open-letter-to-local-10-longshoremen-help-stop-repression-in-local-19-seattle/>

⁷⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/user/deregistered19>

⁷⁵ <http://community.seattletimes.nwsourc.com/archive/?date=19961219&slug=2365793>

⁷⁶ <https://youtu.be/vS6kt8eJURI?t=8m3s>

⁷⁷ <http://www.sonicrising.com/2016/3/28/11318646/seattle-arena-public-benefits-3-labor-peace-sustainability-non-relocation>

⁷⁸ <http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Port-Seattle-Terminal-46.pdf>

⁷⁹ <http://sonicsgate.com/docs/>

⁸⁰ <http://www.seattlemet.com/articles/2012/7/30/emails-about-peter-steinbrueck>

⁸¹ <http://www.sonicrising.com/2016/4/17/11446544/the-murky-waters-of-the-port-of-seattle-part-1/in/11216629>

⁸² http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/20120729_PRESS-RELEASE_ArenaSolution_PortEthics.pdf

⁸³ <http://www.sonicrising.com/2015/12/27/10668758/port-of-seattle-commissioner-bill-bryant-seattle-sodo-arena>

⁸⁴ <http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/news/2016/02/22/study-washington-state-lost-769-5-million-during.html>

⁸⁵ http://sonicsgate.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Seattle-Times-Arena-Poll-Final_20160420.png

⁸⁶ <http://www.seattlechannel.org/explore-videos?videoid=x62477>



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Map of Chris Hansen's Property:



Map of more than 65 prior street vacations approved in SoDo:



Seattle Times poll on Occidental Avenue Street Vacation:

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Daily poll: Should the Seattle City Council OK the vacating of Occidental Avenue for a possible arena?

93% Yes

7% No

1,465 votes • Final results

RETWEETS: 97 LIKES: 43

7:00 PM - 19 Apr 2016