

Appendix F

UBIT letter by West Sound Cycle Club sent to Gov. Inslee and
WSDOT leadership

December 1, 2022

From: Dianne Iverson, West Sound Cycling Club (WSCC), Bremerton, Washington

To: Governor's Office, Barbara Chamberlain, Steve Roark, Emily Randall

Re: Bremerton deserves wider, safer paths on the Warren Avenue Bridge

The only thing preventing Bremerton from building a new 12- or 14-foot multi-modal path on the Warren Avenue Bridge is the absence of an A-62T under bridge inspection truck in the state's inspection truck fleet.

Bremerton is in the planning phase of an amazing upgrade to the Warren Avenue Bridge on SR-303 in Kitsap County. This bridge is the biggest and longest bridge in Bremerton and has an unsafe walkway under 4 feet in width on each side.

Multi-modal improvements on the bridge will complete the nearly 3-mile Bridge to Bridge Urban Trail that will link neighborhoods on each side of Port Washington Narrows. They will be an essential part of the City's planned East Bremerton Bike and Pedestrian Corridor connecting north Bremerton to Olympic College and Downtown. The bridge is just 1.3 miles north of the County's largest employer, the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, and improvements here will encourage more employees to walk, bike or roll to work.

Bremerton City engineers asked for funding to design *8-foot sidewalks* on the Warren Avenue Bridge in **March of 2021**. The reason given was that WSDOT inspection trucks were unable to inspect a bridge with wider paths. The West Sound Cycling Club (WSCC) requested the city council, instead, fund a design for contemporary width shared use paths of 12- to 14-feet, and find an alternative means of inspecting the bridge.

The City Council funded the bridge design, but *stipulated* alternatives for bridge inspection be sought to allow construction of a 12- to 14-foot path, and that the design team consider the WSCC's concept as submitted to council. The following summarizes the council's position.

On April 7, 2021, the Bremerton City Council voted unanimously to approve an Engineering Participating Agreement with WSDOT, GCB 3453, which in the Scope of Work included "Widen one or both sides of the bridge to obtain a desirable shared use path width of 12', excluding shoulders, in accordance with WSDOT DM Chapter 1515." Verbal instructions from Council included direction to study the [WSCC proposal submitted to Council](#), which included 12' and 14' shared use path width options.

In the last year-and-a-half, WSDOT deemed both 12- and 14-foot paths structurally feasible, and an A-62T UBIT with a telescoping arm (slightly larger than the A-62 UBITs in its fleet) could inspect 12- to 14-foot paths.

The following information was submitted to the Warren Avenue Bridge Design committee on November 30, 2022 as justification for not considering a 12- and 14-foot path or paths on the Warren Avenue Bridge.

Some alternatives included purchase of a new Aspen A-62T to provide WSDOT with inspection/maintenance access.

- *Response from WSDOT:*
 - *Existing fleet has been selected to serve the most number of bridges*
 - *Larger UBIT will not be able to serve many of the existing bridges, therefore cannot replace an existing A-62*
 - *Adding an additional truck to the fleet is cost prohibitive*
 - *There are no plan to evaluate the entire bridge inspection program for justification of acquiring an A-62T.*

Council-member Coughlin, a committee member representing the council, asked how many bridges in our state can **not** be inspected by the A-62-T UBIT? The answer was, **“I don’t know, there are no plans to evaluate the entire bridge inspection program for justification of acquiring an A-62T”**. From our perspective, it seems likely that any bridge that cannot be inspected by a new A-62T could be inspected instead by any of the state’s three A-62 UBITs, as they are now.

I contacted the UBIT manufacturer to verify the information provided by WSDOT. I was told the A-62T provides all the functionality of the A-62 and **more**. The A-62T can substitute for the A-62 in almost all situations, except the rare instance when a bridge can support the weight of an A-62 but not the additional 12,000-pounds of an A-62T.

I learned that WSDOT is currently going through a procurement process for a brand new A-62 UBIT machine costing about \$800,000. The bids are due in mid-December.

An A-62T UBIT costs just under \$1,000,000, according to the representative at Aspen Ariels which has been supplying WSDOT with UBITS for 10 years.

West Sound Cycling Club's request - **WSDOT should purchase an A-62T *instead of an A-62 during the current bid process to benefit Bremerton and any city or county wanting to upgrade a bridge on a state highway to current multi-modal standards.***

Bremerton deserves a shared use path on one or both sides of our bridge that meets the same safe multimodal standards as does the SR-520 floating bridge from Medina to the University of Washington. A zip code should not determine the level of safety that a community's multi-modal paths provide. State guidelines recommend a 12- to 14-foot path. In my experience as a cyclist, walker, and user of wheelchairs, this path width is an important safety feature, especially within urban centers such as Bremerton.

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Member Bremerton's Complete Streets Committee.
Member Warren Avenue Bridge Stakeholders Committee.
Board member West Sound Cycling Club.
Vice Chair Leafline Trails Coalition.