

## **Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Robin Ellis <robinells@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 01, 2015 3:25 PM  
**To:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** Case: 151906

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Hello,

I am writing to share my concern about the Ride the Ducks. I do not think they belong on the roads of Seattle at all (let alone in my neighborhood at Eastlake on Fairview Avenue East). The recent accident that killed 5 people was horrific. These menaces were created for war not for sight seeing in our fair city.

Here are some of the concerns we share at Eastlake as Ride the Ducks is planning to build a new ramp:

- Fairview Ave East is not a well-maintained street and cannot handle weight from Ride the Duck Vehicles.
- Fairview Ave East is the same width as, and more narrow than, the Aurora Bridge. RTD stated they will not drive on the bridge again.
- Ride the Ducks traffic will make entering and leaving the more-than-seven driveways on Fairview Avenue East difficult and dangerous.
- Bikers drive on Fairview Ave East instead of Eastlake Ave East.
- The Cheshiahud Trail, provided by Seattle funding, encourages walkers to be on Fairview Ave East and with the new ramp, Ride the Ducks would cross this well-used trail interfering with walkers, cyclists, pets, etc.  
If the plan is implemented, 17 Duck vehicles will make 5 round-trip crossings of Fairview Ave. every 3.3 minutes for 10 hrs. per day, 7 days a week during peak season, estimated to be 4-5 months of the year. That means dangerous Duck vehicles could cross our street 170 times a day

Robin Anne Ellis

## **Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Robert Burk <robertburk@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 01, 2015 5:25 PM  
**To:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** 151906

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

1. The Aurora Bridge tragedy with a Ride-the-Ducks vehicle may be related to narrow lanes, but narrow lanes abound in Seattle. Military vehicles were not designed for traveling on Seattle streets. Ability for the driver, especially one that is also conducting a 'Party on Wheels' in addition to driving, to see pedestrians and traffic is impeded by the design of the vehicle.
2. When in the water the vehicles need to avoid anywhere where there are swimmers, kayakers paddle boarders and other water users that the driver may not be able to see or maneuver quickly enough to avoid.
3. Seattle is not alone with respect to Ride-the-Ducks tragedy. Please review: <http://stoptheduck.com/>

Thank you

Robert Burk  
2017 Fairview Ave E, #G  
Seattle, WA 98102  
206.390.9178  
[robertburk@comcast.net](mailto:robertburk@comcast.net)

## **Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Blair Robbins <blair@blairrobbins.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 02, 2015 9:22 AM  
**To:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** 151906

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

The fatal accident on Seattle's Aurora Bridge raises serious questions about the safety of allowing Ride-the-Ducks amphibious vehicles on the streets and waterways of our city. The lanes on the Aurora Bridge may be tight, but narrow lanes abound in our urban environment. Why should Seattle risk the lives of its residents by allowing oversized vehicles purely for entertainment purposes?

**ON LAND:** Seattle is a city that is rapidly growing, as evidenced by the many construction projects underway. Not only is the downtown core becoming more densely populated, but also the neighborhoods adjacent to the city. Increased density has brought traffic congestion and several road projects are underway or are planned. Seattle also has a many bike commuters and a bike-share program. Ride-the-Ducks military vehicles were not made for congested city streets. They further hinder traffic flow and pose a serious safety risk to the diverse users of our city's streets which include primarily users much smaller than the RTD vehicles -- cars, motorcycles, bicyclists, pedestrians. RTD drivers do not have full attention on the road as they also conduct a 'party on wheels'.

**ON WATER:** Ride-the-Ducks vehicles are amphibious and travel in our city's waterways. Seattle has made its waterways amenable to recreation by creating city parks on the water. Residents enjoy a variety of recreational activities on the water including swimming, paddleboarding, kayaking, windsurfing, daysailing and more. It is important that these recreationalists, who are primarily residents versus tourists, are safe from potential dangers such as RTD vehicles who may not see them or who may not be able to maneuver away from them in time.

Let's take appropriate action to stop the possibility of a future tragedy involving Ride-the-Ducks by getting them off our streets and waterways now!

Thank you.

Blair Robbins  
2017 Fairview Avenue East, #G  
Seattle, WA 98102  
206.390.9837  
[blair@blairrobbins.com](mailto:blair@blairrobbins.com)

## **Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Peter Erickson <peter@peter-erickson.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 02, 2015 11:18 AM  
**To:** Public Involvement (UTC)  
**Cc:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** TE-151906 Ride The Ducks

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

To whom it may concern:

With regard to Ride The Ducks, why are the profits of an individual enterprise being allowed to trump the obvious public safety violations related to this operation across the United States?

- These 2 ton military vehicles were designed to transport troops across water and beach heads..... not through narrow city roads, bridges and urban streets.
- You have hard data in the form of fatality accidents in Boston on the water and now Seattle on the streets \_ all of it clearly demonstrating the fact that these vehicles have inherently poor visibility for their drivers in tight, densely trafficked urban environments. This improper use of a military vehicle on urban streets results in deaths and injury of innocent people. Why is the UTC allowing this?
- Of much lesser concern, Ride The Ducks also requires its drivers who are already taxed operating a difficult piece of equipment to also entertain over a microphone, act as tour guide and change music to keep its passengers happy. We have national laws about driving and talking on the phone so why are they allowed to function as they are?

Please explain some rational logic as to why these vehicles are clearly being exempted from normal public safety laws. If this is approved again I'd like to know how you'll prevent surplus military tanks from being allowed to escort tourists through cities given the precedent of Ride The Ducks

Thank you.

Sincerely

Peter Erickson

## **Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Brigitte <brigitte@bertschi.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 02, 2015 11:57 AM  
**To:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** TE-151906 \_ Ride the Ducks

To whom it may concern:

With regard to Ride The Ducks, why are the profits of an individual enterprise being allowed to trump the obvious public safety violations related to this operation across the United States?

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Please explain some rational logic as to why these vehicles are clearly being exempted from normal public safety laws. If this is approved again I'd like to know how you'll prevent surplus military tanks from being allowed to escort tourists through cities given the precedent of Ride The Ducks

Thank you.

Sincerely

Brigitte Bertschi

**Brigitte Bertschi**  
Head of School

Bertschi School educates children  
to become compassionate, confident  
and creative learners in a global  
community.

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<http://www.bertschi.org>

**Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Margaret Allen <mdallenmd@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 02, 2015 3:02 PM  
**To:** Public Involvement (UTC)  
**Cc:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** TE-151906—Ride the Ducks Safety Concerns

RE: TE-151906—Ride the Ducks Safety Concerns

Dear UTC Members,

I am writing to ask that you diligently consider the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists as you review the Ride the Ducks application to operate in a residential Seattle neighborhood.

As I'm sure you are aware, the Ride the Ducks amphibious vehicles are very wide and very tall. The driver, even if he/she is paying attention, cannot see people or vehicles that are below, to the side, and/or in front of the bow of the "boat". By the current plan, Duck vehicles will be crossing the busy Cheshiaud pedestrian walkway and bicycle path that the city recently rebuilt specifically for pedestrian and bicycle use. Persons using this pathway every day include most of the employees of the adjacent Puget Sound Blood Center as well as the nearby Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. I also see FHCRC cancer patients walking to and from their appointments on this pathway--people who really aren't in any condition to be running out of the way. There is no crossing signal when a DuckBoat would be approaching, and, given that DuckBoats will be crossing this pathway every 15 minutes, putting up a train crossing-style barricade isn't really practical--the barricade would be down virtually all of the time. If allowed to proceed, the current plan is just asking for a new accident to occur.

According to the current plan, the DuckBoats will come down Newton Street from Eastlake Avenue, a major north-south thoroughfare. Right now, cars park along one side of Newton, which leaves only one driving lane on this "two-way" street. It is tight for a single car to drive down this street next to the parked cars, and two cars cannot pass. A DuckBoat could not even pass a bicyclist on this street. The wide sides of the DuckBoats may well overlap onto the sidewalk here, putting pedestrians on Newton at risk. Further, there is no street light or even a stop sign at the corner of busy Eastlake Avenue and Newton, where the DuckBoats would be making their turns. (Again, remember the frequency will be every 15 minutes.) These military vehicles were not at all designed for operating in dense urban areas.

I hope the UTC will carefully weigh the safety concerns of Seattle citizens against the interests of this commercial enterprise. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Margaret Allen, Eastlake resident and Cheshiaud pathway user  
Email: [mdallenmd@yahoo.com](mailto:mdallenmd@yahoo.com)  
(My comment was also submitted through the UTC website)

**Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Maureen Neitz <maureenneitz1@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 02, 2015 3:43 PM  
**To:** Public Involvement (UTC)  
**Cc:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** TE-151906 \_ Ride the Ducks

To whom it may concern:

I live and work in Seattle, and I either ride my bike or walk to work. My path crosses that of the Ride the Ducks. These vehicles are a hazard to pedestrian, bicyclists and motorist, and as Seattle continues to grow, the hazard intensifies. The Ducks are known to have very poor visibility for cars, and other vehicles let alone pedestrians and bicyclists. Ride the Ducks has a terrible record nationwide in terms of accidents and maintenance of vehicles. Why are the profits of an entertainment company taking precedence over the needs for public safety on the already crowded, and narrow streets of Seattle?

**Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Gail Jensen <gail6005@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 02, 2015 2:53 PM  
**To:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** Ride the Duck 151906

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello,  
I received email saying I should copy this address when I write comments to the UTC.



## **Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Arlene Fairfield <arlene@arlenefairfield.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 02, 2015 7:19 PM  
**To:** Public Involvement (UTC)  
**Cc:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** TE-151906 \_ Ride the Ducks

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

To whom it may concern:

With regard to Ride The Ducks, why are the profits of an individual enterprise being allowed to trump the obvious public safety violations related to this operation across the United States?

- These 2 ton military vehicles were designed to transport troops across water and beach heads..... not through narrow city roads, bridges and urban streets.
- You have hard data in the form of fatality accidents in Boston on the water and now Seattle on the streets \_ all of it clearly demonstrating the fact that these vehicles have inherently poor visibility for their drivers in tight, densely trafficked urban environments. This improper use of a military vehicle on urban streets results in deaths and injury of innocent people. Why is the UTC allowing this?
- Of much lesser concern, Ride The Ducks also requires its drivers who are already taxed operating a difficult piece of equipment to also entertain over a microphone, act as tour guide and change music to keep its passengers happy. We have national laws about driving and talking on the phone so why are they allowed to function as they are?

Please explain some rational logic as to why these vehicles are clearly being exempted from normal public safety laws. If this is approved again I'd like to know how you'll prevent surplus military tanks from being allowed to escort tourists through cities given the precedent of Ride The Ducks.

Thank you.

Sincerely

Arlene Fairfield

206.898.8795

**Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Rob Widmeyer <[rwidmeyer@LMNArchitects.com](mailto:rwidmeyer@LMNArchitects.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 02, 2015 10:40 PM  
**To:** Public Involvement (UTC)  
**Cc:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** RE: TE-151906 Ride the Ducks  
**Attachments:** Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Large Truck and Bus Fatal Crash Statistics.xls

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Recent news stories document that Duck vehicles have been involved in multiple accidents in multiple cities with fatalities. I note at least 20 fatalities, and numerous other injury accidents. As there are only 100 - 140 of these vehicles operating in the entire US, the number of accidents, and fatalities is very significant, over any measured period – many times the rate of other large vehicles per mile driven. Please review the information provided on: <http://stoptheduck.com/>, or just in the recent news stories. Then compare the accident record of Duck vehicles with **Large Truck and Bus Crash Facts 2013 from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (attached)**. The only conclusion possible is that Duck vehicles are extraordinarily unsafe and should not be allowed on Seattle city streets.

Thank you,  
Rob Widmeyer  
2017 Fairview Avenue East  
Seattle WA 98102

## Bostelle, Kym (ATG)

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**From:** bsfranks@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 03, 2015 8:29 AM  
**To:** Public Involvement (UTC); ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** Case #151906 :: Ride-the-Ducks safety issues; request to prohibit their operation

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

To Whom It May Concern,

As a quick introduction, I'm a longtime Seattle resident and vocal opponent of the Ride-the-Ducks operations. Over the past three years, following a proposed driving route change to the Ride-the-Ducks operations along a narrow corridor of streets in Seattle, I've joined with hundreds of Eastlake neighborhood residents and many community organizations (Seattle Parks Department, neighborhood community councils, Floating Home Association, Center for Wooden Boats, etc.) to raise substantial safety issues with the Ducks.

Briefly, these safety issues include:

- numerous Seattle Police reports of Ride-the-Ducks accidents with cars, cyclists, and pedestrians attest to the Ducks **poor visibility** while driving on land and **wide turning radius**
- numerous accidents involving amphibious Duck boats in other places (Philadelphia, Arkansas, London) resulting in accidents and casualties attest to an outrageously high number of deaths per amphibious vehicle in operation; these are patently unsafe vehicles and tours
- substantial risks with a newly proposed tour driving route in Seattle that is characterized by unprotected and very frequent intersections (every 3.5 minutes) with the pedestrian-centric Fairview Ave Green Street, Cheshiahud Loop commuter trail, direct adjacency to city bike share stations, forthcoming Howe Street Steps pedestrian plaza and crossing, and proposed dedicated cycle-track as part of the Fairview Ave bridge replacement.

Recently, following the Aurora Bridge tragedy resulting in senseless death and widespread injury, Ride-the-Ducks themselves have voluntarily agreed to no longer drive on the Aurora Bridge because the bridge's narrowest lanes (at 9.5ft) were too narrow to be safe for the Duck boats. And yet, many of the city streets they drive on as part of their tour are narrower than that. ***If the Ducks themselves recognize Aurora Bridge lanes as too narrow to be safe, how can narrower city routes – with the added complications of pedestrians, cyclists, parked cars – not be seen as even more unsafe?***

If left unchecked, hundreds of daily pedestrians, cyclists, work commuters, and Seattle Parks visitors will be in jeopardy from the amphibious Duck vehicles driving along our narrow city streets with their reduced visibility, wide turns, and deadly, antiquated mass.

I understand that the UTC and NTSB are seriously investigating maintenance issues of these military amphibious vehicles. However, what is being done to regulate & ensure the public safety if these military vehicles are returned to service? Will Duck boat transit along city streets be sensibly prohibited? Will Duck boat travel intersecting with widely used pedestrian and cyclist corridors or public parks be prohibited?

Allowing the Ducks to simply return to business-as-usual along different roadways while waiting for another preventable tragedy is unconscionable.

Thank you,

Ben Franks

**Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Robert Burk <robertburk@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 08, 2015 4:36 PM  
**To:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** TE-151906

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

In the Motion to Expedite Hearing (Respondent RTDS) (2015-11-06).pdf Mr. Tracey is arguing that a re-start would save the jobs of 130 people. This number could be his peak employment during the summer. As a seasonal business he naturally lays off most of his staff for the winter. I recall a web chat where a former driver mentioned number of drivers going from 20 to 5. Except for office staff and mechanics, all other positions would reduce proportionally. Tracey's real first concern is not safety, or even his employees – it's his own financial wellbeing. UTC should hold to their schedule to insure a thorough process and full examination of the safety issues. That process also needs to address how to inspect metal fatigue in Ducks that were last built in 1945.

Robert Burk  
2017 Fairview Ave E, #G  
Seattle, WA 98102  
206.390.9178  
[robertburk@comcast.net](mailto:robertburk@comcast.net)

**Bostelle, Kym (ATG)**

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**From:** Kim Ladd <kladd@live.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 02, 2015 11:41 PM  
**To:** Public Involvement (UTC)  
**Cc:** ATG WWW E-mail Public Counsel  
**Subject:** Fwd: TE-151906 \_ Ride the Ducks

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Kim Ladd <kladd@live.com>  
**Date:** November 2, 2015 at 10:55:30 PM PST  
**To:** Kim Ladd <kladd@live.com>, Peter <ladd007@yahoo.com>  
**Subject:** TE-151906 \_ Ride the Ducks

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 2, 2015, at 10:54 PM, Kim Ladd <kladd@live.com> wrote:

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 2, 2015, at 10:30 PM, Kim Ladd <kladd@live.com> wrote:

To whom it may concern,

I am writing as a concerned lake union resident located on fairview ave e and the impact Ride The Ducks vehicles will have in our neighborhood.

The constant traffic of these over sized vehicles during the summer months present a serious safety threat to dog walkers, bicyclists, runners and swimmers. Our community has also proudly supported and participated in various marathon activities throughout the years which effect Fairview Ave E. (Ie: See Jane

Run Race, Lake Union 10k Run, Lake Union Loop). How will the traffic from Ride the Ducks impact these events and residents?

Thank you,

Kim Ladd

(This was resent because my original letter did not cc [utility@art.wa.gov](mailto:utility@art.wa.gov)). Thank you.