

1 decisions, whether it means selling your home, closing your
2 business, deciding not to take a cruise ship, or not attend
3 the Seattle Aquarium, because of the disruption. That is
4 not discussed in the Draft, and it is a serious omission.

5 I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

6 ROBERT NOKES: My name is Robert Nokes. I am a
7 homeowner in the Alaskan Way neighborhood, and you don't
8 need my address. I have read the E.I.S. Statement and I
9 think there are some deficiencies in the Statement that
10 need to be talked about.

11 But before I go into that, I would like to, for the
12 record, say that I think this kind of a forum is not an
13 appropriate way in which to hear all of the public's
14 comments with respect to the E.I.S. I think the State
15 Department of Transportation should reconsider having more
16 public meetings and having true public testimony, because I
17 think the fair bid can be gained by people speaking in
18 public and feeding on each others ideas, and flushing out
19 the full issues that are in front of the D.O.T. I see this
20 kind of a process, the open house process, as a way to kind
21 of divide and conquer the neighborhood, by isolating people
22 and having them only put their information directly to
23 either a court reporter or through a computer process. It
24 denies everyone the possibility of hearing others' opinions
25 and having actual hearing examiners, with some authority,

H-007-001

We understand that members of the public may prefer different ways to share their comments. In order to encourage as much feedback as possible, we provided several options. At the hearings, attendees could submit comments on a written form, on a computer using an electronic form, or verbally to a court reporter. In addition to the meetings, the public could submit comments by mail or e-mail to the program team. The program team often holds open house-format public meetings to provide as much flexibility as possible to the public. With an open house format, hearing participants are able to come and go to the meetings as their schedules allow, making the meetings more convenient for many people.

H-007-001

1 who actually listen to those opinions and help develop
2 their opinions with respect to E.I.S. Statement.

H-007-002

3 As to the D.O.T. E.I.S. Statement itself, I think
4 there are some deficiencies. I've been a resident of the
5 Alaskan Way neighborhood for a number of years, and I can
6 say it's a very vital neighborhood. I think, not only do
7 we have a large residential population on Alaskan Way, we
8 have also benefitted from a great deal of money and effort
9 by the Port of Seattle to develop Pier 66. There has been
10 a lot of private money in the development of the Marriott
11 and other properties along the waterfront, and it is a very
12 vital neighborhood. It is, in many respects, a gateway to
13 Seattle for many, many travelers that come to see our
14 city.

15 I would say that most visitors to Seattle remember
16 two or three things about their visit. One is the
17 waterfront, Pike Place Market of course falls under that,
18 as well as the Space Needle, maybe even the Ballard Locks
19 from time to time. But my concern is if the
20 E.I.S. Statement doesn't carefully consider the true costs
21 of trying to build this project while never interfering
22 with traffic flow, as it is currently defined, that we may
23 drive away a whole generation of potential visitors to
24 Seattle.

25 I'm thinking, in particular, about the additional

H-007-002

The 2004 Draft EIS evaluated one construction plan that considered brief closures of SR 99 during construction, but otherwise assumed that at least two lanes would be provided in each direction on SR 99 or an alternate detour route. In comments received on the 2004 Draft EIS, many people asked the lead agencies to consider more than one construction plan. Specifically, many people wanted to know if closing the corridor would reduce the amount of time it takes to build the project. To respond to this question, three different construction plans were developed (a shorter construction plan, an intermediate construction plan, and a longer construction plan) and evaluated in the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS. Since 2006, the Cut-and-Cover Tunnel and Elevated Structure Alternatives and the construction approach for each of the alternatives have been refined. One construction plan is analyzed for each of the alternatives (Bored Tunnel, Cut-and-Cover Tunnel, and Elevated Structure) in the Final EIS. Chapter 3 describes each alternative and its construction plan, and Chapter 6 describes construction effects.

After the 2004 Draft EIS was issued, numerous comments were received relating to the visual impacts and other negative effects (including the cost) of the Battery Street Flyover Detour. As the design plans for the Cut-and-Cover Tunnel and the Elevated Structure Alternatives evolved, the Battery Street Flyover Detour was eliminated primarily due to these impacts.

H-007-002

1 expense of the throughway that they're calling a temporary
2 bridge, while the route traffic during construction of this
3 project. First of all the E.I.S. Statement does not talk
4 about what is the true cost of that, how much extra time
5 will it take to build that and tear it down and, as a
6 result, how much extra money is it truly going to cost
7 Seattle to continue routing traffic during one instruction
8 phase.

H-007-003

9 My concern is if this D.O.T. doesn't carefully
10 consider the alternatives, i.e. not continuing to route all
11 traffic during this period, and allowing a reconsideration
12 of routing traffic through other venues in downtown
13 Seattle, or the I-5 corridor, without careful consideration
14 of that, we may be expending so much money for a very
15 temporary result, that no one truly even is able to
16 identify. Not only is there a cost of building and tearing
17 down, there is cost of potentially destroying this
18 neighborhood, driving away tourist traffic, destroying most
19 of the businesses on the waterfront, perhaps even driving
20 away cruise ship traffic to Seattle. All of those indirect
21 expenses to Seattle, I think, can add up to be a very, very
22 large number.

H-007-004

23 If a construction period is for four or five years,
24 it's conceivable to get through that process and still have
25 a vibrant waterfront area for visitors. My concern is if a

H-007-003

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle appreciate receiving your comments. After the 2004 Draft EIS was published, your comments along with others led to additional planning, analysis, and the revised alternatives presented in the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS. Following publication of the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS, there was not a consensus on how to replace the viaduct along the central waterfront. In March 2007, Governor Gregoire, former King County Executive Sims, and former City of Seattle Mayor Nickels initiated a public process called the Partnership Process to develop a solution for replacing the viaduct along the central waterfront. Details about the project history are described in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS. Because the project has evolved since comments were submitted in 2004, please refer to this Final EIS for the current information.

In January 2009, Governor Gregoire, former King County Executive Sims, and former Seattle Mayor Nickels recommended replacing the central waterfront portion of the Alaskan Way Viaduct with a single, large-diameter bored tunnel. After the recommendation was made, the Bored Tunnel Alternative was analyzed and compared to the Viaduct Closed (No Build Alternative), Cut-and-Cover Tunnel, and Elevated Structure Alternatives in the 2010 Supplemental Draft EIS. The comments received on the 2004 Draft and 2006 Supplemental Draft EISs, subsequent Partnership Process, and the analysis presented in the 2010 Supplemental Draft EIS led to the lead agencies' decision to identify the Bored Tunnel Alternative as the preferred alternative for replacing the viaduct along the central waterfront.

H-007-004

The 2004 Draft EIS evaluated one construction plan that considered brief closures of SR 99 during construction, but otherwise assumed that at least two lanes would be provided in each direction on SR 99 or an alternate detour route. In comments received on the 2004 Draft EIS,

H-007-004

1 construction period lasts for 10 years, it may well teach
2 an entire generation of people that Seattle is nothing more
3 than a construction zone, and destroy the vitality of the
4 downtown.

H-007-005

5 In addition to those costs there are the potential
6 destruction of property values and, therefore, the tax
7 revenues that will be generated for the values of the
8 properties on the waterfront. So, I think this has a
9 potential negative impact, if it isn't carefully thought
10 through.

H-007-006

11 There has been recent press, a group suggesting that
12 we just tear down the Alaskan Way Viaduct and not rebuild
13 it. I don't advocate that. But I do think it would be a
14 very valuable exercise to figure out what the traffic
15 patterns in Seattle would be, and how they could be
16 minimized, the problems resulting from that, how they could
17 be minimized, as a way to improve the project plan for the
18 Alaskan Way Viaduct reconstruction.

H-007-007

19 In addition to these concerns, I also have pure
20 financial concerns, with a finance background. If the
21 project is going to take 10 years instead of 5 years,
22 there's a much larger opportunity for losing money through
23 interest rate increases, through construction increases, or
24 through inflation, and it strikes me that careful
25 consideration needs to be taken in trying to shorten the

many people asked the lead agencies to consider more than one construction plan. To respond to this question, three different construction plans were developed and evaluated in the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS.

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle are committed to communicating and coordinating with the downtown and waterfront neighborhoods and businesses through open houses, community briefings, newsletter updates, and e-mail. The lead agencies are also committed to implementing construction mitigation measures to offset the impacts of construction on the downtown area as much as possible. Proposed construction mitigation measures are discussed in the Final EIS.

H-007-005

There will be a slight decrease in the number of properties paying property taxes as some properties are converted from private use into public right-of-way at the beginning of construction. The effect of this is that the tax burden is redistributed to the remaining parcels in King County that do pay property taxes.

At the end of construction, and depending on the final design, there may be some parcels that previously were right-of-way that are no longer needed and can be sold and returned to the inventory of property tax-paying parcels. This would offset the effect on property taxes that will occur at the beginning of construction.

During construction, the effect on the value of an individual parcel as measured by its sale price, and the resultant effect on the assessed value for tax collecting purposes, is dependent on a great many factors and cannot be calculated without speculation. It should be noted that during the Central Artery Project in Boston, the rate of redevelopment of abutting parcels actually increased dramatically during the project's

H-007-007

1 lengths of duration of this project from start to finish.

2 One other concern that I have is that the
3 E.I.S. Statement does not talk at all about how the project
4 will be financed. I have a bit of a concern that if a
5 project is started without the full clarification of where
6 the monies are coming from, that it is perhaps worse to
7 start the project and stop it midstream, than to do nothing
8 at all, because that would have a terrible impact on the
9 neighborhood.

10 I used to live in Albuquerque, and the major freeway
11 that's going to downtown Albuquerque was slated for
12 reconstruction which was begun and halted, and it's been
13 that way for over 10 years. And I have a concern that we
14 not do that kind of thing to our city in the construction
15 of this project. So, please carefully consider, when you
16 draft your final E.I.S. Statement, how to minimize the
17 amount of time that it will take to build this project or
18 also try to figure out the true costs associated with
19 dragging out the extent of this project and the throughway,
20 and all of the others things that will destroy the
21 neighborhood. Thank you very much.

22 SANDRA MISSNER: My name is Sandra Missner, and I do
23 live on the waterfront. My concern is that I am in support
24 of the six-lane tunnel option, but I am opposed to the
25 temporary fly-over bypass that would direct interim traffic

16

construction in anticipation of indirect economic benefits that were reasonably expected to occur.

H-007-006

Many people asked the lead agencies to consider an alternative that would remove the viaduct and replace it with a four-lane surface roadway along Alaskan Way and include transit improvements. Without a host of improvements and modifications, a four-lane Alaskan Way would create even more congestion on I-5 and downtown streets than the alternatives evaluated in the Draft and Supplemental Draft EISs. Transportation studies performed for this project indicate that replacing the viaduct with a four-lane surface street would substantially increase congestion for most of the day and part of the evening on I-5 through downtown Seattle, downtown streets, and Alaskan Way. On downtown streets, traffic would increase by 30 percent, though traffic increases to specific areas like Pioneer Square and the waterfront could exceed 30 percent. With a four-lane roadway, traffic on Alaskan Way would quadruple to 35,000 to 56,000 vehicles per day compared to about 10,000 vehicles today. This traffic increase would make Alaskan Way the busiest street downtown, carrying more traffic than Mercer Street does today. The increased traffic congestion would also make travel times worse for buses, making transit improvements along these streets largely ineffective. Finally, neighborhoods west of I-5 (Ballard, Queen Anne, Magnolia, and West Seattle) would be less accessible and would face longer commute times.

H-007-007

An EIS intentionally does not evaluate funding or financial issues. This allows the documents to discuss and compare a broad range of environmental issues that are not easily quantified in terms of cost. The lead agencies are very concerned about project costs and have invested substantial effort into accurately evaluating the cost of each alternative.

A variety of financing mechanisms are under consideration and overall costs will continue to be an important part of the decision process.