

April 6, 2004

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Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project
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Comments: Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project

Your March 2004 bulletin requested comments on the five Viaduct alternatives.

I-104-001

REBUILD is the preferred alternative followed by AERIAL. The REBUILD retains the beautiful view of the city while traveling over the waterfront and provides easy access to First Avenue and the Waterfront from under the Viaduct parking. The Viaduct has withstood several earthquakes and major fires therefore the original concept has stood the test of time.

I-104-002

TUNNEL. Neither TUNNEL alternative is acceptable. The cost, construction time delay, lack of beauty, underwater hazard and earthquake risk make these alternatives unacceptable. We will never use the tunnels!

SURFACE. The surface option will invite pedestrian accidents and wipe out the Waterfront businesses. Philadelphia has a similar surface plan between the Independence Mall and the Delaware River waterfront. While the Independence Mall has attracted millions, access to the waterfront is difficult due to the expressway in between. Several historic ships are on the waterfront, otherwise tourist business is lacking and the area is an eyesore.

I-104-003

There seems to be a lack of concern regarding the TIME FRAME of 6 to 11 years. This long construction delay will have a serious impact on downtown business in addition to waterfront and tourist business. Impact causes accelerated actual depreciation of building values and the permanent loss of a substantial share of your property tax revenue. Have you considered an accelerated cost and time frame to keep your business base alive? Philadelphia has miles of abandoned business operations due to a similar faulted business concept. The downtown business heart of Tacoma was also destroyed several years ago by similar civic improvement. All the businesses moved to the Tacoma Mall in the suburbs.

Sincerely


Dan Caldwell
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I-104-001

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle appreciate receiving your comments on the Rebuild or Aerial Alternative. After studying several retrofitting concepts, the lead agencies found that rebuilding the viaduct would not be a cost-effective, long-term solution that adequately addresses the risks to public safety and the weakened state of the viaduct. Elements of the Rebuild and Aerial Alternatives were incorporated into the Elevated Structure Alternative, which was analyzed in the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS and the Final EIS. Because the project has evolved since comments were submitted in 2004, please refer to the Final EIS for current information.

I-104-002

Your objections to the 2004 Cut-and-Cover Tunnel, Bypass Tunnel, and Surface Alternatives are noted.

I-104-003

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.