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H-053-001

5 I came down tonight because of remarks Mayor
6 Nickels has persisted in making about the
7 overwhelming desire to build a tunnel project, and I
8 wish to refute that on my part and accuse the mayor
9 of being duplicitous, having a hidden agenda, and
10 saying things that weren't true, will not be true, in
11 order to cast the viaduct in the worst possible light
12 possible.

13 I feel that the engineering solution that is the
14 lowest cost and has the most flexibility built into
15 it is the best route to go, and I deeply resent the
16 mayor attempting to say or show that we would lose
17 all of our views by the way he would have it
18 constructed if it were a viaduct as engineering
19 standards can dictate any number of options,
20 restrained only by the materials and engineering
21 design used.

H-053-002

22 I think public safety is compromised inherently
23 by having a below-grade waterfront tunnel. Blasts of
24 a nature similar to the early attempts on the World
25 Trade Center, which were vans loaded with explosives,

H-053-001

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle appreciate receiving your comments.

H-053-002

All reasonable measures would be taken to make the tunnel as safe and secure as possible. The structure will be far more robust than the existing viaduct. Emergency exits would be located approximately every 650 feet and would be built to conform with the current Fire and Life Safety code. The City of Seattle also has an Emergency Management Plan to be put in place in the event of explosions, major accidents, or other potential major emergencies involving the tunnel.

H-053-002

1 placed at each end of the viaduct -- or at the tunnel
2 during rush hour would lead to a catastrophic loss of
3 life and inability to use the roadway for an extended
4 period of time compared to the time it would take to
5 repair a viaduct, which is an open structure, from
6 the same power of explosives.

H-053-003

7 In this world, with us being a port city and
8 already having a demonstrable track record of
9 terrorists attempting to enter the state shows that
10 they're already aware of what they can do to this
11 town. The alternative process proposed by I think
12 it's Victor Gray -- it's over on the far wall --
13 retrofit is not enough, Bulletin 09.06, speaks to an
14 issue I saw on one of the public channels as an
15 alternative to either the tunnel or the State's plan
16 to fix the viaduct.

17 To me, its chief benefit is the roadway would not
18 be completely shut down at any time during the
19 project. This to me makes it a highly desirable
20 alternative to either the mayor's or the State's
21 plans, and I think that just because Victor brought
22 it up does not mean we should not give the plan
23 complete and total scrutiny and maintain an open mind
24 on whether or not it will be structurally viable and
25 within normal cost parameters.

H-053-003

An independent Evaluation of Gray's Retrofit Proposal (July 31, 2006) was prepared for WSDOT by TY LIN International. The evaluation found that the proposal makes some improvements but that the foundations of the viaduct would still remain vulnerable to earthquake damage.

Completely closing SR 99 during construction is a concern for many people. FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle have carefully considered the trade-offs between the amount of time that construction would take and keeping SR 99 open to traffic. The Final EIS describes the current construction approach for each alternative.

H-053-004

1 I think that there is a strong bias towards the
2 tunnel by developers and by the mayor because of the
3 benefits financially to both parties, not only the
4 immediate changes along the corridor that would
5 result to developers, but the follow-on changes in
6 the character of the city waterfront would generate a
7 huge amount of revenue far in excess of that which
8 would be generated by maintaining what we have. And
9 the mayor would benefit because of more tax revenues
10 coming in from the same area.

11 None of this considers benefit to the citizens of
12 the area as a whole, only to special interest. And I
13 feel that the viaduct is a working structure, our
14 waterfront is a working waterfront, and I personally
15 would like to see it that way. I do not want to see
16 all of Seattle yuppified into a cutesy place like
17 Leavenworth. It's a working location just like South
18 Seattle south of the Kingdome is a working part of
19 town.

H-053-005

20 I am concerned about the wisdom of having only
21 one major north/south traffic corridor during the
22 time of construction of the viaduct alternative. If
23 something happens to I-5, we really don't have an
24 alternative method of getting through town, and if
25 you have it at the wrong spot, you can't even get

H-053-004

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle appreciate receiving your comments on the Elevated Structure Alternative. Because the project has evolved since comments were submitted in 2006, please refer to the Final EIS for current information.

H-053-005

Construction of a new major north/south traffic corridor in the project area to accommodate construction traffic or future traffic increases has been determined not to be feasible. Construction impacts are described in Chapter 6 of the Final EIS. Traffic conditions on city streets and I-5 during construction are expected to be more difficult than what is being experienced today. Mitigation measures will be in place as described in Chapter 8 of the Final EIS.

H-053-005

1 onto 405 from the south end because everything comes
2 very close together down there at Renton.

3 So I would like to see a plan that maintains an
4 alternative to I-5 in the worst possible case
5 scenario, not only during the construction of the
6 viaduct, reconstruction or refit or whatever it is,
7 but ongoing into the future.

H-053-006

8 We need flexibility. Catastrophic events happen.
9 Nothing will ever stop them, and there's no
10 predicting what they'll be or when they will occur,
11 so we need to have alternatives already set up, in
12 place as just a normal way of doing business, and I
13 think that the viaduct's placement the way it exists
14 as it exists is the best way of doing that, and I
15 would favor Victor's alternative plan.

16 We do not need to get rid of construction debris
17 before you can start the project. You can reinforce
18 the structure along its length wherever engineering
19 necessities occur with the best possible
20 state-of-the-art construction methods at the time.

21 Ideally, I would like to see a design that
22 increases capacity through the area, that increases
23 the throughput of automobile traffic, including our
24 large trucks and other vehicles that maintain the
25 lifeblood flow in the Seattle area, and I think his

H-053-006

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle are moving forward to implement the project. Please see the response to comment H-053-003 concerning Gray's Retrofit Proposal. The alternatives studied in the Final EIS will maintain capacity to efficiently move people and goods to and through downtown Seattle.

H-053-006

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design would do that more cost-effectively than any
other alternative put out by other parties.

(Public comments concluded.)