From: 42margaret@seanet.com [mailto:42margaret@seanet.com]
Sent: Friday, September 15, 2006 7:58 PM
To: WSDOT Alaskan Way Viaduct
Subject: AWV Feedback
Sent from:
Address:
City:
State:
WA
County:
King County
Zip:
98125
Email:
42margaret@seanet.com
Phone:
Comments:

I-615-001 A tunnel is similar to the now dead monorail project in terms of: escalating costs, money better used elseware, the foolishness of going underground in an earthquake and rising water level environment. I believe that no replacement and increased light rail and other public transportation improvements would better serve our city.

I-615-001

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.

The preferred Bored Tunnel Alternative is a safe option. Generally, structural engineers agree that tunnels are one of the safest places to be during an earthquake because the tunnel moves with the earth. No Seattle tunnels were damaged during the 2001 Nisqually earthquake, including the Mt. Baker and Mercer Island I-90 tunnels, Battery Street Tunnel, Third Avenue Bus Tunnel, and Burlington Northern Tunnel.

The bored tunnel would be built to current seismic standards, which are considerably more stringent than what was in place when the viaduct was built in the early 1950s. The bored tunnel design includes improving

relatively soft, liquefiable soils found near the south tunnel portal. Emergency exits would be provided every 650 feet in the tunnel. In addition, current data on global warming and possible sea level rise are being used in the design process to ensure that the tunnel would be protected from rising sea levels and the possible threat of tsunamis.