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Subject: Viaduct: Study the alternatives more thoroughly.
Date: Thursday, September 21, 2006 1:35:03 PM
Attachments:

To my elected representatives and the WSDOT,

I-652-001 Revised cost estimates on Viaduct options now have both the tunnel plan and the elevated plan appearing to be unaffordable.

What study, independent and thorough, has the state or city done to engender citizen trust on this issue? Nothing I have seen, including the revised cost-estimates, some evidence that these potential-inflationary cost increases were already known about and disregarded, and a flimsy financing plan, have left me as a citizen unwilling to trust that all of the decision-makers have done the appropriate work on the Viaduct replacement issue.

I-652-002 This morning the news that the Mayor of Seattle, based on these new higher cost estimates, has decided to retract his support of allowing the issue to appear on a public ballot, is further evidence that the citizens of Seattle, King County and Washington State should not trust their elected officials desires for the advancement of either the Viaduct Elevated Replacement or the much-heralded Tunnel Option.

I-652-003 Neither is an environmentally friendly choice. Neither has been studied to determine if by the time of completion, which we are told is somewhere between 2019 & 2022, will be a viable transportation corridor/component in terms of capacity or even possibly outmoded in it's envisioned design. As Mayor Nickels is fond of saying, we shouldn't shackle future generations with our mistakes. What has been done to determine that by 2022 the tunnel

I-652-001

Overall project costs are included with the project description and are used for the analysis of economic impacts. Cost estimates for mitigation are included in the overall project costs. These estimates, along with other cost estimates, are refined as the planning and design process proceeds and details are developed. All cost estimates allow for escalation and inflation and include contingencies for unforeseen events. The project is included in the financially-constrained long range plan adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council (the area's Metropolitan Planning Organization, or MPO). Cost estimates for the alternatives evaluated in the Final EIS are:

- Bored Tunnel – \$1.96 billion
- Cut-and-Cover Tunnel – \$3.0 to \$3.6 billion
- Elevated Structure – \$1.9 to \$2.4 billion

These cost estimates do include different elements. The Bored Tunnel Alternative cost does not include replacing the seawall, improving the Alaskan Way surface street, or building a streetcar. Costs for the Cut-and Cover Tunnel and Elevated Structure Alternatives do not include replacing the seawall between Union and Broad Streets.

I-652-002

Selection of the preferred alternative was made after consideration of many factors, including the advisory vote. Please see Chapter 2, Alternatives Development, in the Final EIS for a summary of the project history.

I-652-003

Extensive modeling has been conducted to project future traffic volumes on SR 99 in the planning year 2030. The project will maintain the mobility, accessibility, and traffic safety in the corridor under all of the

- I-652-003** | will not need to be shut down to retrofit for mass-transit or shipping options? (see Downtown Bus Tunnel.)
- I-652-004** | Also the often mentioned "pedestrian-friendly waterfront environment" that the Nickels administration says will be created through the tunnel option has not been studied with an eye towards how the city can maintain services and safety in expanded public areas/parks. Seattle is not currently able to maintain and service it's existing parks or keep them safe for the majority of it's population.
- I-652-005** | I urge you to develop a range of lower cost alternatives for viaduct replacement. Open the discussion to experts and authorities without vested interest in the outcome, and determine through research a proper model for our future. This should include the Transit + Streets approach, where all the available capacity in the transportation network is considered. This is one alternative, that has already had initial study and independently verified support of the research, that will save us money, provide increased mobility for everyone in the area, improve transit service, and help meet greenhouse gas reduction goals, while allowing a more balanced budgetary approach to maintaining an open waterfront for all.
- I-652-006** | Without considering all the information or by taking the public's direct vote out of the process you are unable to ensure a truly democratic process for this very important component of Seattle's and the state of Washington's, environmental and economic future.

best,
Philip Shaw

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alternatives. Please see the Final EIS for the current transportation modeling analysis for all the proposed build alternatives.

I-652-004

With the preferred Bored Tunnel Alternative, the final configuration of Alaskan Way will be determined by the Central Waterfront Project being led by the City of Seattle. This project is not studying the City of Seattle's ability to maintain or keep its public open space facilities safe as part of the EIS.

I-652-005

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.

I-652-006

An advisory vote took place in 2007 before the Partnership Process that led to development and recommendation of the preferred alternative. Please see Chapter 2, Alternatives Development, for a summary of the project history and development of the build alternatives.