From: John Storz
To: AWV SDEIS Comments
CC:
Subject: AWV Replacement Justifications
Date: Friday, August 04, 2006 7:41:49 PM
Attachments:

Sorry - I ussed the wrong address on my first transmission
10628 32 nd Ave SW
Seattle WA 98146-1706
July 4, 2006

To: Members Of Seattle City Council
Mayor Greg Nickels (at his exclusive web site)
Washington State DOT AWV Project
cc: 34th District Legislators
King County Executive Ron Sims
King County Council Person Larry Phillips
Subject: AWV Project Justification Statements

I-663-001

It alludes me why the Mayor, the City Council, and Doug MacDonald (WSDOT) would state that the tunnel concept was the preferred alternative when one or more alternatives have the ability to meet the AWV replacement goals. There is major community/voter disagreement with these positions which, in my opinion, only represent the addressees until a vote is held.

These opinions of elected officials is particularly confusing when the EIS draft update has the following statement: "The project goals and screening criteria were BETTER MET BY OTHER ALTERNATIVES (such as Rebuild, aerial, and now the Elevated Structure Alternative) that propose to replace the viaduct with a double-level structure, minimizing the width required for an aerial structure along the central waterfront" (emphasis added)

I-663-002

The Mayor seems determined to force a two -level tunnel down the throats of Seattle to meet his personal vision for ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE WATERFRONT. This is a vision that will enrich a few at the expense of tax payers from many jurisdictions in and around Seattle.

In his view a viaduct is ugly, and the tunnel alternative would provide a place for downtown workers to lunch and relax, and be a destination for tourists. It is obvious that his views are vastly overstated with little or no support.

The Mayor apparently doesn't acknowledge media findings that most downtown workers have a half hour lunch and either bring lunches from home or use local fast food outlets. Work often continues while eating at their desks Walking time from the centroid of downtown workers would take the majority of allotted lunch time.

Again the Mayor vastly overstates the current and potential future attraction of the waterfront to tourists. With three or four ships docking near downtown, the current tourist attractions are not overloaded. And if Pier 91 becomes the center for cruise ships, the waterfront will receive little impact from that source. With surrounding communities

I-663-001

The lead agencies have identified the Bored Tunnel Alternative as the preferred alternative due to its ability to best meet the project's identified purposes and needs and the support it has received from diverse interests. It meets project goals better than other alternatives and with fewer impacts. This is not to say other alternatives do not meet the goals, just that the Bored Tunnel Alternative meets them better.

I-663-002

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle appreciate receiving your comments. As a result of the comments received on the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS, additional planning and analysis was conducted and presented in the 2010 Supplemental Draft EIS.

After the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS was published, 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 2006, 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 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS, subsequent Partnership Process, and the analysis presented in the 2010

I-663-002

developing convention center facilities in lower cost areas, the viability of major increases in future tourist visits is in question.

The media has also found that cruise ship tourist primarily make only short stops, if any, in Seattle to support connection with ships and exiting transportation.

It is difficult to fathom any type of new economic development with a tunnel that doesn't vastly enrich only a few property owners, developers and businesses. It is not hard to imagine the rush to build 70 story, luxury offices/condos West of First Avenue . A WINDFALL !!! AND FUNDED BY THE PUBLIC FOR THE FEW !!!!

The need for park facilities for the expanding number of high-price downtown condos should have been considered by the City long ago before adopting an ultra high density planning view of downtown !!! The waterfront will never be a Central Park. And the existence of Myrtle Edwards Park has not entered City evaluations!! These residents bought into limited or no park conditions with their desire to be Downtown. No Tears Please !!!

This is one of a number of AWV comment and EIS input messages that I will be sending.

Sincerely
John Storz
206-244-1941
E Mail: jtstorz@verizon

PS: I believe that I am already on mailing lists of all addressees

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.

From:John Storz
To:AWV SDEIS Comments
CC:
Subject: AWV Tunnel Safety and Security
Date: Friday, August 04, 2006 7:46:25 PM
Attachments:

Sorry !!! First transmission was sent to the wrong address

10628 32 nd Ave SW
Seattle WA 98146-1706

August 4, 2006

To: Members Of Seattle City Council
Mayor Greg Nickels (at his exclusive web site)
Washington State DOT AWV Project - Attn: Kate Stenberg
cc: 34th District Legislators
King County Executive Ron Sims
King County Council Person Larry Phillips
King County Council Person Dow Constantine

Subject: Safety and Security Issues For Replacement Of the AWV

I-663-003

There appears to be no means in the EIS or other global documents where the very important issue of tunnel Safety and Security is addressed, and documented for public vetting of the two viable alternates for replacing the current AWV (viaduct or tunnel).

The stacked tunnel alternate is obviously the prime candidate for in-depth safety and security analysis before any final voter decision is made (November 2006 or a later vote). Egress from the lower South bound tunnel lanes is the most critical issue, and the upper North bound lanes are somewhat less critical but not immune to egress problems. The ability of persons of all ages and physical capability to ascend from the lower tunnel is highly questionable even if personal exits are place at frequent intervals (assuming stairway exits).

The EIS merely has minimal statements indicating that ventilation, lighting and pumping systems will be included in the design. THIS IS NOT ADEQUATE, and doesn't present a warm fuzzy feeling to those who are knowledgable in the disciplines of safety analysis. Totally redundant systems are very expensive and their usefulness even in a maximum negative environment is also questionable. There is no indication in the draft EIS that backup systems are planned. There are two many real world examples to state that single, fool proof systems can be created.

I-663-004

Natural Disasters
Although tunnel design requirements for major earthquakes are expected, there is no assurance the foundation and wall/seawall design will act as predicted in the variable earth conditions in the area. Leakage or rupture is certain to occur !! A

I-663-003

Please see the Final EIS for current information about the emergency systems proposed for the tunnel alternatives. Specific emergency rescue plans to be used by emergency service providers during tunnel operation will be developed once the final design of the project is complete. The lead agencies have coordinated with emergency service providers throughout preliminary design of the project and will continue to coordinate with emergency providers as the project heads toward construction and operation. The emergency evacuation system for the tunnel will be approved by the Seattle Fire Department and will be based on local and national standards for public safety.

I-663-004

The design criteria calls for the tunnel to resist forces similar or greater than those experienced in the Nisqually Earthquake (February 2001) without cracking or rupturing of reinforcement. The tunnel will be designed to withstand the extreme forces of an earthquake with an expected recurrence of 2,500 years (termed a Rare Earthquake). This is based on sophisticated design analysis and 3D earth-structure interaction analysis using specialized software.

See the Final EIS for current information about the design of the preferred Bored Tunnel Alternative.

I-663-004 timed egress such as used in aircraft design should be the minimum validation of egress systems !!! .

I-663-005 Global Unrest Issues
For obvious reasons I will not address the many scenarios related to this condition in the World, but any tunnel design is by nature of its features highly vulnerable to a large loss of life.

Recommendation
The tunnel design begs for a thoroughly vetted technical analysis of various scenarios and the ability of a design (prior to construction) to structurally survive and afford egress for most persons trapped in the tunnel. The nuclear industry uses a process called "Maximum Creditable Accident" which can be adopted perform a safety analysis. THE STACKED TUNNEL DESIGN BEGS FOR SUCH A STUDY PRIOR (1)TO START OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION, AND (2) ANY PUBLIC ELECTION NECESSARY TO APPROVE FUNDING !!! Any preliminary and final design costs estimates for a tunnel must be based on a design with maximum human safety and security.

Sincerely
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I-663-005

Comment noted. The design of the tunnel has been guided by a Fire and Life Safety committee comprised of tunnel ventilation, security, and structural experts that have taken into consideration the latest safety codes and national and international design experience. The tunnel will be designed to withstand the extreme forces of a "Rare Earthquake," that is, one with an expected probability of recurrence only once every 2,500 years. The tunnel will provide emergency egress and will be monitored with state-of-the-art surveillance systems. Please note that the preferred alternative for this project is the Bored Tunnel Alternative. Current project information can be found in the Final EIS.

From: John Storz
To: AWV SDEIS Comments; Tom Rasmussen; Sally Clark; Richard McIver; Richard Conlin; Nick Licata; Jean Godden; Jan Drago; David Della; Peter Steinbrueck;
CC: Ron Sims; Larry Phillips; Rep Joe McDermott 34th; Sen Eric Poulsen; Cody, Rep Eileen;
Subject: AWV Traffic Flow Forecasts
Date: Tuesday, August 08, 2006 5:58:33 PM
Attachments:

10628 32 nd Ave SW
Seattle, WA 98146-1706
August 8,2006

To: Seattle City Council
Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels
State of Washington AWV Project
cc: 34th District Legislatures
King County Executive Ron Simms
King County Council Person Larry Phillips

Subject: Missing Detailed Overview Of Traffic Pattern Impact Of the AWV Project

I-663-006

The AWV State and Seattle team have failed to provide voters with an overall traffic flow document for the entire area affected by the AWV project and should include rationale for flow estimates and show how changes will improve flow particularly in the Mercer and Atlantic/King streets changes. This plan should be thoroughly vetted throughout Seattle prior to any voter decision to precede to detailed design and construction.

The EIS by its nature and law has a specific agenda which DOES NOT look at the impact of new traffic flows resulting from the AWV project and other traffic changes in adjacent areas. A preliminary view of top level sketches of AWV changes presented to the public shows that some of the new, obvious traffic patterns will be complex and will probably extend the traffic gridlock. This condition is being created by the massive and apparently uncontrolled construction of high-rise office and residential construction in the core downtown area plus major changes in the South Lake Union area led by the Vulcan Corporation.

RECOMMENDATION

A plan shall prepared jointly by the State and City Of Seattle to evaluate the major, and global traffic pattern changes that will occur as a result of the AWV project and any other forecast or in-progress road/highway projects in the general area of downtown Seattle. The plan should include I-5, I-90, SR 520, Spokane Street Viaduct, and the internal flows for areas from I-5 to Elliott Bay and from approx one-half mile South of Spokane St and one-half mile North of Mercer St. Variations shall be included for both the tunnel and raised viaduct alternatives.

I-663-006

Thank you for your comments. The project study area is bordered by I-5 to the east, Puget Sound to the west, Aloha Street in the north, and S. Spokane Street in the south. The study area establishes the area for which the transportation performance and effects of the project alternatives are assessed. The most intensive evaluation of transportation performance and impacts was performed on SR 99 itself. Elsewhere in the study area, assessment focuses on capturing the important effects and primary operational differences associated with alternatives.

Transportation analysis takes into account population and employment trends and transportation patterns for the region in addition to those within the study area. Additional detail regarding traffic forecasting methodology is provided in the Final EIS Appendix C, Transportation Discipline Report.

I-663-007

DISCUSSION & OBSERVATIONS

GENERAL
The following are just a few of the examples locations that appear to create more congestion and gridlock in many common scenarios.

Spokane Street Viaduct
Several years ago when early AWV project overview was presented at the Gatewood Grade School in West Seattle, a number of changes to Spokane Street viaduct (East waterway to I-5) were shown. The changes included a new elevated ramp from the North side of East bound Spokane onto the North bound SR-99. A new ramp was also shown from West bound Spokane to North bound SR-99. Anyone from West Seattle who uses the existing ramp from Spokane to SR-99 for points to the North during peak hours painfully know that backups often reach well up the into West Seattle. Any changes at this junction will have major impact on North bound SR-99 and should be viewed openly to voters before any AWV decision. The proposed SR 99 Atlantic Street interchange is the prime example of potential major traffic flow impact for North bound through traffic.

Atlantic Street Interchange
The net effect of current AWV plans shown in the EIS with off/on ramps from SR-99 for both SR-99 directions HAS THE DISTINCT PROBABILITY OF EXTENDING THE DOWNTOWN TRAFIC GRIDLOCK ONTO SR-99 !!!!! This interchange will attract many persons who currently use I-5 and Beacon Hill routes to I-90 to shift to SR-99 and increase the already heavy flow. And if the new ramp from East bound Spokane to North SR-99 becomes a reality, lane changes to use the Atlantic Street off ramp will create unacceptable hazards.

The impact of the Atlantic Street ramps on the intersection with 1 St Avenue is almost too awful to contemplate. The current essential use of 1 st Avenue for a major route into downtown Seattle IS ALREADY HINDERED BY CURRENT ATLANTIC STREET TRAFFIC !!!!! It takes little imagination to predict that Atlantic Street would become a major access to I-90 for areas as far North as Ballard.

The stated need of Atlantic Street for access to the two stadiums is vastly overstated. The current use of 4 th Avenue, 1 st Avenue Viaduct ramps access is needs no improvement. The new off ramps indicated in the EIS may very well be too short and create dangerous backups on SR-99.

Although obvious, has anyone proposed denying access to Spokane Street Viaduct and requiring the use of Alaska Street to Atlantic for East bound heavy truck traffic (primarily maritime shipping container loads).

KING STREET ACCESS TO DOWNTOWN SEATTLE
I have seen no information of the general flow of traffic to downtown Seattle from the mystery King Street concept plan which is needed only to support a stacked tunnel concept. This area has narrow streets and an

I-663-007

No changes are proposed along the S. Spokane Street Viaduct as part of the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project. However, the City of Seattle has several changes proposed along this roadway. Details concerning this project can be found on the City of Seattle's website.

The proposed interchange in the south end would improve access in the south end by adding ramps that provide connections to the stadiums and SR 519, which connects to I-90. Providing additional connections to SR 99 in this location will be helpful in improving the congested traffic conditions that occur along surface streets when events take place in the stadiums. Additionally, the Stadium area interchange will separate vehicle from rail operations. Currently, these operations are not separated and there are times when trains block roadway connections at S. Atlantic Street. The proposed interchange would also improve freight connections between the Duwamish industrial area, Harbor Island, and SR 519 and I-90. Under the Bored Tunnel and Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternatives, the Columbia Street and Seneca Street ramps would no longer exist. Access to downtown would be provided with the Stadium area ramps. The Bored Tunnel and Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternatives are anticipated to offer some improvement overall to traffic operations in the downtown area due to the redistribution of traffic accessing SR 99 to several east–west streets, rather than to a single street (Columbia Street).

Analysis of intersections near the reconfigured Mercer Street and the Stadium area, including Atlantic Street, is included in the Transportation Discipline Report, Appendix C of the Final EIS.

I-663-007

unsolvable traffic jam will occur during events in the two stadiums. I presume that buildings on the historical register in Pioneer Square would be immune from destruction to provide wider streets needed for major traffic flows dictated by this concept. Of course ALL street parking would have to be eliminated in Pioneer Square 24/7.

MERCER STEET MESS

The current EIS plan to make Mercer a two-way street (three lanes each way) from I-5 to 5 th Avenue defies logic from a traffic flow view. The elimination of the Broad Street underpass would force all traffic bound to (1) the waterfront, (2) streets to downtown from 5 th Avenue West to Elliott Bay, (3) and those from I-5/SR-520 to Northbound Elliott Ave North to make a left turn across East bound Mercer at 5 th. A real traffic jam in the making !!! Although only of value of Lake Union waterfront property and the Paul Allen's streetcar line, the current Valley Street/Broad St route permitted multiple access to downtown Seattle. Having left turns from Mercer towards downtown East of SR-99 will cause a huge mess with cars backing up to make left turns due to concurrent heavy East bound traffic squeezed down to three lanes !!!

Sincerely
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From:John Storz
To:AWV SDEIS Comments; Peter Steinbrueck; David Della; Jan Drago; Jean Godden; Nick Licata; Richard Conlin; Richard McIver; Sally Clark; Tom Rasmussen;
CC:Larry Phillips; Ron Sims; Rep Joe McDermott 34th; Sen Eric Poulsen; Cody, Rep Eileen;
Subject: AWV Supplemental Draft EIS Comments
Date: Monday, August 21, 2006 11:24:03 AM
Attachments:

10628 32 nd Ave SW
Seattle, WA 98146-1706
August 20, 2006

To: Seattle City Council
Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels
State of Washington AWV Project

cc: 34th District Legislators
King County Executive Ron Sims
King County Council Person Larry Phillips

Subject: Chapter 2 Project Update to AWV Supplemental Draft EIS, Section2: What Has Changed Since The Draft EIS

I-663-008

Section 2 contains numerous misrepresentations and assumptions by elected officials related to public acceptance of a single alternative to replace the existing AWV.

1. Preferred AWV Alternative

   a. Identification of the tunnel as the preferred alternative by the Mayor and the City Council should be classified as premature and representative of only certain, minor interest groups and not of the overall population of Seattle.
   b. Follow-on endorsement of a tunnel by the Washington DOT and Federal Highway Administration should be viewed in the light of "if the Mayor and the Council want a tunnel, it must be the choice of a majority of Seattle voters". This conclusion by othersshould be noted as limited and without in-depth scope and funding impacts generally know to the public. Room for an elevated or other options should have been left open.

I-663-009

2. New Legislation
   a. Discussions and agreements between City and State leaders in the 2005 Washington Legislative session to accept the tunnel as the preferred alternative were premature since they did not focus on the possibility that there were other, valid AWV alternatives. Subsequent community and media activity has shown that a new viaduct has very strong public support.
   b. The legislation requires the use an outside, expert review panel to issue a report by September 1. 2006 regarding the overall project

I-663-008

It is normal and appropriate for lead agencies to identify a preferred alternative. Identification of a preferred alternative is required by regulation for the Final EIS. All those involved made their decision after careful review of extensive information and considering the opinions of the general public and wide range of organizations.

I-663-009

City and State officials and the Expert Review Panel received sufficient information for their purposes.

I-663-009

plan, design, and cost estimates. This type of review is an essential process for public acceptance of ALL ALTERNATIVES.

c. HOWEVER, the time available to the panel and the limited amount of design/site details DOES NOT provide a serious basis for high quality review. Those who followed the defunct, elevated monorail project well remember the results of a similar process which included low, medium, and high risk estimates for project areas of construction. The result of competitive bidding and a year of scope reduction did not bring the monorail project cost down to the level of the highest risk of the cost/risk study !!! And the elements of the monorail were not as complex the AWV tunnel alternative!

I-663-010

d. The legislation also required Council hearings about the panel findings and a preferred alternative ordnance by November 1, 2006 OR an ADVISORY VOTE OF PUBLIC PREFERENCE during the November 2006 general election. The legislature (with City coaching?) failed to see that a MANDATORY election would be the only appropriate action. There is a presumption that a vote of the electorate for one of the alternatives would be the authorization to proceed on the desires of the citizens of Seattle. And further, that no end-runs would be allowed by tunnel supporters to subvert the will of the voters (as experienced for past sports projects).

I-663-011

3. Potential Funding

The EIS includes sections that provide current (prior to expert panel review) project estimates which are significantly more than funds committed by the State for viaduct replacement !!!

The Mayor of Seattle has COMMITTED to providing up to $500 million if the tunnel alternative is selected (to make up the tunnel funding shortfall). THIS STATEMENT IS A GROSS ERROR SINCE THE MAYOR CANNOT PERSONNALY MAKE AND HAS NO AUTHORITY TO MAKE SUCH A COMMITMENT. THE EIS SHOULD SO INDICATE THIS FACT. THIS IS A POLITICAL STATEMENT OF HIS OWN CHOICE AND SHOULD BE GIVEN NO MORE VALUE THAN THAT !!

Additional, potential Federal funding has been cited. With the massive Federal budget overruns including major lack of funding needed to support those affected by natural disasters, significant additional Federal funding should be considered as only a remote possibility, and not the basis of firm project funding.

Sincerely
John Storz
Seattle Resident (43 years)
206-244-1941
E Mail: jtstorz@verizon.net

I-663-010

In March 2007, the City of Seattle held an advisory vote. The ballot included an Elevated Structure Alternative and a Surface-Tunnel Hybrid Alternative.

I-663-011

It is normal during the course of environmental review for the funding picture to be uncertain or incomplete. This does not preclude agencies and decision-making officials from making informed decisions on a preferred alternative or similar matters.