



June 1, 2004

Mr. Douglas B. MacDonald
Secretary of Transportation
Washington State Department of Transportation
c/o Allison Ray
WSDOT Environmental Coordinator
AWV Project Office
999 Third Avenue, Suite 2424
Seattle, WA 98104

Re: Seattle Monorail Project comments on the SR 99 Alaskan Way Viaduct &
Seawall Replacement Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. MacDonald:

L-009-001

The Seattle Monorail Project (SMP) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Alaskan Way Viaduct (AWV) and Seawall Replacement Project prepared by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the City of Seattle. The viaduct project is important to the city and the region, and the SMP looks forward to coordinating with you on the Monorail Green Line, as it moves toward construction later this year.

SMP is currently completing final route selection and obtaining key permits and approvals for the Green Line. The AWV DEIS discusses impacts to the Green Line in a number of chapters. SMP will continue to work with WSDOT and the City of Seattle to ensure the construction of both projects is coordinated to minimally impact the downtown area, including:

- SMP supports the DEIS proposal for pedestrian crossings over Alaskan Way during construction of the AWV to provide continued access for walk-on ferry passengers. The FEIS should provide additional detail about where pedestrian crossings could be located and the positive impacts of providing convenient access to the Green Line on 2nd Avenue during construction.
- While the DEIS addresses construction impacts to transit services for routes utilizing the West Seattle Bridge and the south SR 99 corridor, the FEIS should also discuss the impacts of rerouting traffic to 1st Avenue, 2nd Avenue, 3rd Avenue and 4th Avenue in the downtown. What impacts will there be on bus routes using those streets and how could those impacts be mitigated?
- AWV preconstruction work, e.g. contractor staging, utility relocation, etc., is currently scheduled for mid-2006 to 2008. The construction of the Green Line is

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The lead agencies appreciated receiving these comments. The Transportation Discipline Report, Appendix C, Chapter 5 Operational Effects, Mitigation, and Benefits explains construction effects including how transit service could be affected. As part of the Bored Tunnel project and related projects, WSDOT and partner agencies have or will implement several strategies that should reduce the effects. For example, both the south and north portal configurations include bus priority lanes to provide reliable travel times for SR 99 transit service into and out of downtown. The streets that transition between SR 99 and the downtown street grid are designed in a manner that meets the City's Complete Street goals and include treatments for pedestrians, bicycles, freight, and adjacent land uses.

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contemplated to occur from 2005-2009. SMP agrees with the AWV DEIS Cumulative Impacts Chapter that states these activities should be coordinated with SMP to avoid or reduce impacts, and we look forward to working with your team.

- The FEIS should discuss the AWV Central Area utility relocations and the importance of coordinating with SMP to avoid impacts to downtown Green Line construction, and utility customers.
- The DEIS discusses the impacts of construction staging areas. SMP will likely be completing downtown Green Line construction in 2008 when AWV construction is expected to begin. The FEIS should discuss the benefits and impacts to the downtown of coordinating with the SMP to utilize, where feasible, former Green Line construction staging areas located in the vicinity of the AWV Project.
- The FEIS should discuss any impact on the Seattle Green Line column placements at S. Horton as a result of BNSF track realignments in the Seattle International Gateway yard and Whatcom tail track required by the AWV project.

The Seattle Monorail Project supports the proposed Flexible Transportation Package described in Chapter 10 of the DEIS. SMP looks forward to working with the AWV project to develop transit options for citizens traveling to and through downtown, the West Seattle and the Interbay/Ballard areas which are important feeders for the AWV corridor. The Green Line is projected to be operational in 2009, and because it is an elevated structure, riders will have the option of a completely congestion-free commute during the time the AWV has only one lane open for vehicles. We look forward to coordinating with all the agencies providing transit options within the city, including working on the interagency team.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and look forward to working closely with you as you complete the Final Environmental Impact Statement. If you have any questions, please contact Denna Cline at (206)587-1737.

Sincerely,



Joel Horn
Executive Director

JH:dc