

Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project

CommentID: 4614 Form 241 CommentDate 4/27/2004
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1. Choose Topic:

Overall	Tunnel	Construction Impacts and
All of the	Bypass Tunnel	Other
Rebuild	Surface	
Aerial	Seawall	

Comment:

I-404-001 I think the tunnel alternative is the most desirable.

If the cost of that alternative proves to be too daunting, the bypass tunnel would be a worthy alternative.

I-404-002 The plan advocated by the "take it down, don't rebuild it" group also deserves to be studied. I strongly recommend including this alternative in the final version of the EIS. Having a cost estimate for this option would provide an excellent baseline by which to compare the costs and benefits of the other plans.

I-404-003 As a resident of Fremont I often use the viaduct as an alternative to I-5 or surface roads when traveling through downtown. As much as I love the view I would trade it for a viaduct-free waterfront, even though my personal use of the waterfront is minimal. The noise pollution and imposing mass of the viaduct today is a tremendous blight on what could be the most enjoyable part of our downtown. Quality of life is not limited to commuting experiences. I would be happy to forego my own viaduct travel in order to have a viaduct-free waterfront.

About the view... Clearly Seattleites like their aerial view of Elliott Bay, even if they're stuck in traffic while they enjoy it. I would suggest that an amusement park ride or elevated walkway could be constructed to provide the same or better view to future Seattleites once the viaduct is gone. To rebuild an aerial viaduct in order to preserve the view for drivers strikes me as desperately perverse.

I-404-001

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle appreciate receiving your comments on the 2004 Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternative. The alignment for the Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternative has been refined in the Final EIS. 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. Because the project has evolved since comments were submitted in 2004, please refer to the Final EIS for current information.

I-404-002

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-404-003

Thank you for your comments. The lead agencies have identified the Bored Tunnel Alternative as the preferred alternative. With this alternative, the downtown waterfront would be viaduct-free.

Chapter 8 (Comparison of Alternatives) of the Final EIS does acknowledge that the current views from the viaduct would be lost as a result of constructing the preferred alternative. Victor Steinbrueck Park does provide similar views towards the west as the top deck of the existing viaduct and would remain after the project is completed to continue to provide similar views.