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From: DSmith6644@aol.com [mailto:DSmith6644@aol.com]

Sent: Friday, May 14, 2004 2:43 PM

To: awvdeiscomments@wsdot.wa.gov

Subject: Viaduct Alternatives

To whom it may concern,

I-470-001

We have been downtown residence for over 20 years and live on First Ave., in the Watermark Tower. We love our neighborhood and the water front. The noise from the viaduct is not overbearing, but constant. A tunnel would help eliminate the noise and allow the Waterfront to become a better attraction for tourists and the people of Seattle, but why do we need a tunnel? Shouldn't we spend the money on mass transit and let the people that need to drive north and south to find another way or drive thru downtown? Downtown could use the traffic and the business. This might encourage more people to move to the city or closer to work. Every day we see the same people that work up north using the viaduct to get from their homes in the south and the watch their return in the evening and the people that work down south drive from their homes up north and turn around and use the viaduct to get back home after work. Obviously, I will never understand their thinking.

I-470-002

If we must express automobiles down 99 and bypass the city I still believe the tunnel is best. I believe the trolley is important to the Waterfront and to Pike Place Market. I would turn the trolley up First Ave. where it crosses First Ave. in Pioneer Square now and then again west at Yeller to Western. Up Western to University and put a "Y" that would continue up Western to the Market, but would a University branch off to the Waterfront and run to the present Trolley barn.

I-470-003

Portland is a prime example of waterfront utilization. Do you remember when the space on the west side of the river that is now a park was a freeway in Portland? Our waterfront could be 100 times better with a more logical planning. But who cares? Right?

Darwin M. Smith

I-470-001

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.

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle appreciate receiving your comments and recognize your preference for the 2004-Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternative as a replacement for the viaduct. Because the project has evolved since comments were submitted in 2004, please refer to the Final EIS for current information.

I-470-002

Construction of the Olympic Sculpture Park in 2008 led to the indefinite suspension of the George Benson Line Waterfront Streetcar service because it displaced the vehicle storage and maintenance facility. King

County Metro currently provides replacement service with fare-free bus service on the Route 99 Waterfront Streetcar Line. The routing and stop locations for this line do not exactly duplicate those of the waterfront streetcar; however, Route 99 serves the same neighborhoods—the waterfront, Pioneer Square, and Chinatown/International District. With the Bored Tunnel Alternative the final location of the streetcar will be determined by the Central Waterfront Project being led by the City of Seattle. Both the Cut-and-Cover Tunnel and the Elevated Structure Alternatives include the streetcar along Alaskan Way.

I-470-003

The opportunity for new public open space is one of the main advantages of the Bored Tunnel Alternative.