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From: art lover [mailto:springinparis@msn.com]
Sent: Tuesday, June 01, 2004 5:01 PM
To: awvdeiscomments@wsdot.wa.gov
Subject: draft eis comments due June 1

Hello. professionally I am not a planner, architect etc. but speak as a Seattle native who has followed the viaduct replacement/waterfront planning process.

I-505-001 At its current height, the viaduct does bisect the Seattle waterfront and makes it much less inviting than it could be. If it were to be rebuilt aerially, I would like to see it several stories higher; and, if that is not practicable, then the tunnel alternative is the best.

I-505-002 In all Eis alternatives, a surface route with 3-4 lanes of traffic going each way is envisioned. This is too much surface traffic. At most, there should be 2 lanes each way on the surface. The point is that pedestrians need to move easily between the waterfront and the city, and anything beyond 2 lanes of traffic 1-way essentially just moves the viaduct down onto the street, creating yet another barrier with noise, pollution, and safety problems.

Of course, there should be wide, well-marked bicycle lanes, and places at either end of downtown where car owners could park their cars and ride bikes around the downtown core (I am not sure whether this idea, my own, has been presented by Cascadia or any of the architectural firms which donated their own time to the charette (sp?) sponsored by Allied Arts).

I-505-003 In addition, in Chap. 7 tunnel alternative the tunnel is seen as shoring up the seawall. To beautify the shoreline and allow better alternatives for salmon, the shoreline should be made as "natural" as possible with pocket parks, such as those on Alki beach. Vegetation should overhang the shoreline in places to allow cooler places for young salmon. This would mean the tunnel would be built further east.

The alternatives presented by Cascadia should be given heavy weight. I have seen their presentation, looked at their schematics, and they present a view of Seattle's future that is exciting, innovative, environmentally and pedestrian/bicyclist friendly, as befitting a city with such a bounty of natural and intellectual resources. Seattle needs to be on the cutting edge.

I-505-004 However, I am also heavily concerned with historic preservation, and it is important to ensure that Pioneer Square and other older brick buildings are preserved. I do not know whether they would be better preserved with a tunnel or with an aerial structure. Shoring up of foundations may be more expensive, but worth it. Seattle needs every single historic structure left in the downtown -- without them, architecturally, it turns into just another sleek "upscale" city.

Please! Incorporate the ideas of Cascadia and the comments of People for Puget Sound, as well as those of Allied Arts! Thank you, Karen Tofte

I-505-001

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle appreciate receiving your comments and recognize your preference to construct an elevated structure that is much higher. The lead agencies have identified the Bored Tunnel Alternative as the preferred alternative. Please see the Final EIS for current information about the project alternatives.

I-505-002

Under the Bored Tunnel Alternative the final configuration of Alaskan Way will be determined by the Central Waterfront Project being led by the City of Seattle. If the viaduct is replaced by a tunnel, more open space would become available. This new space could become a wide waterfront promenade with bike and pedestrian paths.

I-505-003

If the preferred Bored Tunnel Alternative is selected, replacement of the seawall would occur under a separate project, the Elliott Bay Seawall Project, led by the City of Seattle. The redevelopment of the central waterfront would occur under a separate project, the Central Waterfront Project, also led by the City of Seattle.

If the Elevated Structure Alternative or Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternative is selected, the replacement of the seawall would be included as part of that alternative. For these alternatives, creating beaches is not proposed. Recreating a natural beach would require a gently-sloping intertidal area. To accomplish this, the shoreline would need to be pulled back well into the Alaskan Way corridor where streets, sidewalks, open space, and utilities would be located. Or it would require filling an area west of the seawall - an action strongly discouraged by natural resource agencies because of impacts to existing intertidal and nearshore habitat. Planning and design for project alternatives preserves salmon habitat by minimizing or avoiding digging or filling along the shoreline, and minimizing or avoiding new overwater structures that reduce the function

of habitat by shading them. Please see the Final EIS for current seawall replacement design information as it applies to the Elevated Structure Alternative and the Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternative.

I-505-004

The lead agencies are also concerned with the preservation of historic buildings within the project area. Vibration effects and the preservation of historic buildings are addressed in Chapters 6, Construction Effects, and Chapter 8, Mitigation, of the Final EIS. A more detailed discussion can be found in Appendix I, Section 106: Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources Discipline Report.