AWV Draft EIS Comment Form Results:

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Would like to be added to the project mailing list?

Yes

Project Comments:

I-512-001 I live in West Seattle and commute to the University/Sand Point area daily. I split my commute between driving my car and riding the bus, depending on work assignments. SR99 is an essential route for me with either transit option.

SR99 provides the fastest transit time for me during the morning and evening high-capacity commute times. SR520/I-5 is excessively difficult from the University area due to the interweave near Mercer and high number of traffic accidents. Surface streets through downtown also cause long delays due to high capacity, pedestrians, and numerous stoplights. Alaska Way is also congested due to ferry traffic.

My average drive time from Sand Point area to West Seattle during morning/evening commute:
SR99 : 15-20 minutes
SR520/I5 : 30-40 minutes
Downtown surface streets: 45-60 minutes
Alaska Way/surface streets: 45-60 minutes
Bus Transit (3 buses, change downtown and university): 90-120 minutes

I recommend the following as the best options:
#1 choice: Rebuild with at-grade option for South
#2 choice: Aerial with at-grade option for South

My top 2 choices seem the most efficient in terms of cost, construction time, and safety. It leaves parking spaces and pedestrian access open to the waterfront and keeps freight traffic away from pedestrians. It also keeps Alaska Way as a viable alternative in case of a traffic accident on SR99 and/or I5.

Though the tunnel idea is interesting, the prohibitive cost makes it unviable. Given the number of tall buildings surrounding the current viaduct, I don't believe the tunnel options will provide a great deal of visual improvement. I enjoy spending time along the waterfront and do not believe the viaduct is an eyesore or too loud. The lack of parking with the option is also a consideration.

The surface option is a terrible alternative. It would create a traffic mess, remove valuable parking space, and completely ruin the convenient pedestrian access to the waterfront.

I-512-002 With the aerial alternative, is the widened Mercer underpass absolutely necessary? If not, could this option be removed to save cost/time and possibly be presented as a separate improvement under a different transportation plan?

I-512-003 Given the poor soil stability, new research about the Seattle fault, and recent tsunami hazard map from DNR, the waterfront and Central area are particularly prone to natural hazards. Replacing the seawall needs to happen as quickly as possible, and therefore a cost- and time-efficient plan is crucial to obtaining federal, state, and local funds. Keeping multiple evacuation routes open to pedestrians and traffic are also important.

Comments apply to:

Overall Project

All of the Alternatives

Seawall

I-512-001

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle appreciate receiving your comments on the Rebuild and Aerial Alternatives. After studying several retrofitting concepts, the lead agencies found that rebuilding the viaduct would not be a cost-effective, long-term solution that adequately addresses the risks to public safety and the weakened state of the viaduct. Elements of the Rebuild and Aerial Alternatives were incorporated into the Elevated Structure Alternative, which was analyzed in the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS and the Final EIS. Because the project has evolved since comments were submitted in 2004, please refer to the Final EIS for current information.

I-512-002

Since 2004 comments were submitted, the project has evolved. Chapter 3 of the Final EIS describes the current alternatives. The City of Seattle is leading separate projects to improve Mercer Street between Elliott Avenue W. and Fifth Avenue N., and from Dexter Avenue N. to I-5, which will accommodate two-way traffic. This project will work with the City on the Mercer Street improvements between Fifth Avenue N. and Dexter Avenue N. to coordinate the roadway design and construction.

I-512-003

The preferred Bored Tunnel Alternative is a safe alternative. Generally, structural engineers agree that tunnels are one of the safest places to be during an earthquake, because the tunnel moves with the earth. No Seattle tunnels were damaged during the 2001 Nisqually earthquake, including the Mt. Baker and Mercer Island I-90 tunnels, Battery Street Tunnel, Third Avenue Bus Tunnel, and Burlington Northern Tunnel.

The bored tunnel would be built to current seismic standards, which are considerably more stringent than what was in place when the viaduct was built in the early 1950s. The bored tunnel design includes improving relatively soft, liquefiable soils found near the south tunnel portal.

Emergency exits would be provided every 650 feet in the tunnel. Project engineers have studied current data on global warming and possible sea level rise and concluded that the seawall provides enough room to protect the tunnel from rising sea levels. The engineers also considered the possible threat of tsunamis during the design process.