

June 1, 2004

AWV Project Office
Allison Ray
999 Third Avenue, Suite 2424
Seattle, Washington 98104

Dear Ms. Ray:

The dialog regarding the upcoming changes to the Seattle waterfront is encouraging. I applaud the City and all the partners for the effort that has gone into exploring options for a truly great central waterfront fitting for a city of Seattle's stature. This is a once in a century opportunity calling for a bold statement. Although funding is a challenge, lack of money is no excuse for doing the wrong thing. If there is political will there is a way. This opportunity for Seattle has come on our watch and we are the ones who will be to blame if we mess it up a second time. An attractive city where people want to live and work makes economic sense and is a good investment

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The cut and cover tunnel, although a disappointment to me since it doesn't go far enough in creating a destination pedestrian space at the water and getting traffic past Belltown, is the best alternative. No additional surface traffic should be places on the Alaskan Way Corridor. Have you looked at all alternatives for reducing the traffic there? How much could actually be diverted to the freeway or other routes?

My excitement about the possibility of removing the Viaduct is diminished by the fact that it seems to be at the expense of Belltown. We do not want a raised viaduct into the Battery Street tunnel nor extra traffic on our streets especially Western and Elliott. The noise level at the Belltown P-Patch and Cottage Park is already so loud it interferes with programs in the park. Will the traffic pattern you project increase this noise level? If so, what mitigating measures do you propose?

The waterfront is Belltown's front yard. Getting to it is problematic right now. How much will the traffic on our north / south streets increase and what will you do to improve pedestrian safety when crossing these streets? Almost every street is a



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FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle appreciate receiving your comments on the 2004 Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternative. 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.

Ray
June 1, 2004
Page 2

B-012-001

major pedestrian corridor to the waterfront connecting hundreds of people to their front yard and recreation area. It doesn't seem like the right thing to do to create more of a barrier to the waterfront than already exists. In fact, this project should improve the connection. Have you reviewed the Growing Vine Street Plan to see that the community has planned for a major pedestrian connection to the water at Vine Street? How will the proposed sea wall construction and traffic patterns impact or support this plan?

Getting the traffic into the Battery Street Tunnel is a design problem. We do not want an elevated structure that makes the situation worse than already exists. Did you notice that the Belltown Neighborhood Plan identifies the intersection of 1st and Battery as "view point"? Not only is there a view corridor to the water, but the amount of street area around and including the triangular piece of land which, I think, is owned by City light, amounts to nearly three acres. This amount of open space lets the sun into the heart of Belltown. Pedestrians should be able to flow pleasantly down to the waterfront from this location. What are the negative impacts of the tunnel entrance design on this view point and the pedestrian connection to the waterfront? How can they be mitigated?

Western Avenue will be the major pedestrian connection between the new Sculpture Park and the Pike Place Market. Hundreds of residential units front on this street and will use it daily. How will your plans for Western Avenue accommodate this increased pedestrian traffic considering both safety and the quality of the experience?

Remember, we will soon forget how much the project cost but we will live with the results for decades. Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity by taking shortcuts that we will all regret for the rest of our lives.

Sincerely



Carolyn Geise, FAIA