From: Mark Brown (REDMOND) [Mark.R.Brown@microsoft.com]
Sent: Friday, November 26, 2010 6:16 PM
To: AWV SDEIS Comments
Subject: comments on SDEIS

I-019-001 The SDEIS's rationale for not evaluating the impact of tolling is bogus. The Viaduct Closed alternative would, by its nature, not involve tolling (the tolling implementation would be prohibitively complex, comparable to Central London, and the cost of this alternative would not require tolling). The other alternatives will almost surely involve tolling because (a) tolling is straightforward to implement for those alternatives and (b) those alternatives are hugely expensive and the money must come from somewhere.

I-019-002 Even without tolling, your report shows that a large amount of current viaduct traffic will take surface roads because the tunnel lacks downtown exits.

I-019-003 So what will the impact of tolling be? By your own estimates, tolling will divert about *two-thirds* of current viaduct traffic to surface roads! Surely some mitigation will be required to cope with this diversion. This mitigation will be expensive – who will pay? The apparent answer is that *nobody* is prepared to pay, especially not the state given the results of the most recent election.

An honest report would point out these "inconvenient truths".

I-019-004 We should follow San Francisco's example and go with the Viaduct Closed option. Continued exploration of the tunnel option would be a waste of time and money.

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I-019-001

Currently, the Washington State Department of Transportation does not have the authority from the Washington State Legislature to toll State Route 99 (SR 99). As legislative action is required to toll this facility, the evaluation of the non-tolled Bored Tunnel Alternative in the 2010 Supplemental Draft EIS accurately reflects the current status of the project. However, if the Washington State Legislature decides to use authorize tolling, the potential effects of tolling do need to be evaluated and documented. Therefore, the Final EIS evaluates all the build alternatives with tolls and without tolls in Chapters 5 and 6.

I-019-002

Yes, the Bored Tunnel Alternative would result in some modification of travel patterns. For instance, traffic that currently uses the mid-town ramps at Columbia and Seneca Street are expected to instead use the new Stadium Area ramps near S. Royal Brougham. Traffic using the thse ramps to access downtown would disperse over several city arterials, including the improved Alaskan Way, First, Second, and Fourth Avenues. Also, there would be an increase in vehicles along arterials near the waterfront due to the lack of ramps at Elliott and Western Avenues.

I-019-003

The analyses regarding how tolls might be implemented as part of the proposed action were preliminary for the 2010 Supplemental Draft EIS but have been updated for the Final EIS. They will be further refined during final design through a joint planning effort (described below) should the state legislature authorize tolls on the SR 99 Bored Tunnel. The analysis in the Final EIS represents a conservative estimate of the impacts of tolling the SR 99 Bored Tunnel. We anticipate that any effects due to applying tolls to the SR 99 Bored Tunnel will be notably less than those described in the Final EIS analysis.

Prior to a final decision about how the SR 99 Bored Tunnel would be tolled, the Washington State Department of Transportation will be working with the Seattle Department of Transportation and other agencies to refine and optimize how to toll the SR 99 tunnel while minimizing diversion of traffic to city streets and minimizing potential effects to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. WSDOT, with cooperation from the City of Seattle, the Port of Seattle, and King County, will establish a Tolling Advisory Committee to provide strategies for minimizing diversion impacts. Chapter 8 of the Final EIS further discusses the role and objectives of the Tolling Advisory Committee.

As part of the Bored Tunnel project and related projects, WSDOT and partner agencies have or will implement several strategies that should reduce the effects of potential diversion. For example, both the south and north portal configurations include bus priority lanes to provide reliable travel times for SR 99 transit service into and out of downtown. The streets that transition between SR 99 and the downtown street grid are designed in a manner that meets the City's Complete Street goals and include treatments for pedestrians, bicycles, freight, and adjacent land uses.

In advance of construction, WSDOT funded Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) investments that provide improved signal operations and travel time information on SR 99 and city streets such as 15th Avenue NW that were likely to see increased volumes due to SR 99 construction activities. These investments will have lasting value. Supplemental transit services and transportation demand management were also implemented with assistance from the City of Seattle and King County, and these strategies can form the blueprint for future strategies.

I-019-004

The Final EIS analyses the Bored Tunnel, Cut-and-Cover Tunnel, and Elevated Structure Alternatives. In addition, the Viaduct Closed (No Build

Alternative) is carried forward as required by environmental regulations to provide baseline information about conditions in the project areas if nothing were done. These alternatives are fully described in Chapter 3 of the Final EIS.