From: Helen [helenontheroad@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, November 06, 2010 2:11 PM
To: AWV SDEIS Comments
Subject: Public Comment: Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project

I-101-001

As a resident of Seattle, I'd like to add my comment to the issue of a deep bore tunnel project to replace the Alaskan Way viaduct.

Having lived in West Seattle for 9 years, I fully appreciate the convenience and beautiful vistas offered by the current viaduct and my first reaction to the tunnel was despair at losing a viaduct I'd come to rely on, but **we must all think beyond on narrow and immediate self-interest and act for a greater and long-term good**.

It is with the intent to inspire the most inclusive and expansive thinking of our state's transportation officials that I offer **five reasons the tunnel is a NOT a good idea for Seattle:**

1. The tunnel won't have down town exits, making it useless for a great number of commuters
2. The tunnel will be tolled, prompting many motorists to avoid the cost of the tunnel and use toll-free surface streets instead, resulting in less income for the project and a whole lot of money spent for not as much traffic
3. Given our need to reduce carbon emissions to avoid more catastrophic climate change, a mega investment for carbon-emitting vehicles is not a wise or strategic use of our scarce resources
4. Seattle will almost certainly be saddled with cost overruns that could further devastate our economy
5. A mere 1 meter sea leavel increase anticipated from melting ice caps will put the tunnel underwater

I advocate that we put our collective money into building a carbon-neutral infrastructure that will actually help more of us and be a good investment in our future!

Sincerely,
Helen Lowe
Seattle WA

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With the preferred Bored Tunnel and Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternatives, the southbound on-ramp at Columbia Street and the northbound off-ramp at Seneca Street will be removed. Traffic patterns are expected to alter slightly with removal of these ramps, and the Alaskan Way surface street is expected to carry additional traffic to and from the central business district. To provide similar capacity levels as currently exists today, six lanes of traffic on the Alaskan Way surface street are necessary south of Yesler Way. With the Elevated Structure Alternative, additional lanes proposed on portions of Alaskan Way are for the purpose of improving traffic circulation and flow, especially in the vicinity of Colman Dock. The Bored Tunnel Alternative does not include the Alaskan Way surface street as part of the project. Overall, it is expected that traffic that diverts to use surface streets and I-5 will distribute based on available capacity of these various roadways. At this time, there are no plans to substantially increase capacity along I-5 through the downtown core. Appendix C, Transportation Discipline Report, addresses traffic safety issues. Please refer to the Final EIS for current information.

The analyses regarding how tolls might be implemented as part of the proposed action are preliminary in nature and will be further refined should the state legislature authorize tolls on the SR 99 Bored Tunnel. The potential effects resulting from these preliminary analyses represent the upper end of implementing tolls on 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 SDOT, the Port of Seattle, and King County, will establish a Tolling Advisory Committee to provide strategies for minimizing diversion impacts.

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.

Although costs are an important part of project planning and decision-making, they are purposely not a major part of the environmental review process. As provided in CFR 1502.23 "For purposes of complying with the Act, the weighing of the merits and drawbacks of the various alternatives need not be displayed in a monetary cost-benefit analysis and should not be when there are important qualitative considerations." Overall project costs are included with the project description and are used for the analysis of economic impacts.

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.