From: j. petrait [jergins@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, November 16, 2010 1:31 PM
To: AWV SDEIS Comments
Subject: Deep concern over the deep bore tunnel

Hi. After having sifted through the draft EIS, I have some comments.

I-126-001 First, where is the transit? This was supposed to be part of the project, but there's little to no mention of transit in these documents.

I-126-002 The cost of this is phenomenal. And I don't mean phenomenal in a good way. This massive cost, with concerns over overruns, along with Seattle being on the hook for those overruns, makes me deeply skeptical of this project. As a Seattle resident that doesn't want this tunnel, I'm offended that I might have to pay for it if it goes over budget.

I-126-003 Pioneer Square sinking, losing historic buildings? Have we thought this through? And the
I-126-004 massive portals at the north and south end, destroying more land, adding to greenhouse gases, once again cutting the city off from the water (Sodo) and cutting lower queen anne off from south lake union? This is a waste of money, does nothing to cut emissions, does nothing to get people onto transit. And with $4 tolls you know cheap Seattleites won't be using the tunnel. They'll take surface streets just because they think they'll be saving money, not considering the traffic they'll get stuck in.

To spend this much without so much as one exit in downtown, four billion for a bypass, are we crazy? Can we just stop this now?

Thanks,

Jason Petrait
Georgetown and Seattle resident
(206) 384-0829

I-126-001

The focus of the project scope is replacement of an elevated highway. However, the project would include elements that support public transit. These elements include transit speed and reliability improvements that would be available during and after project construction. In the south area, there would be a bus-only lane in the northbound SR 99 off-ramp. In the north area bus-only lanes would be provided on Aurora Avenue that will support transit operations in the South Lake Union area.

I-126-002

The bored tunnel cost estimate is based on WSDOT's Cost Estimate Validation Process for large projects, which was developed in 2002. This process uses outside experts to help establish a more comprehensive budget at the early stages of a project and identify risks that need to be actively managed. It takes into account project changes, mitigation, inflation and risk - something projects that experience cost overruns generally fail to do.

Independent experts and cost estimators experienced in tunnels, underground construction, and megaproject delivery have reviewed the bored tunnel cost estimate. The viaduct replacement project also has a technical advisory team with more than 295 years of collective experience delivering projects around the world that provides guidance on risk management, construction methods, and oversight.

To better understand the conditions we would encounter during construction, crews have conducted more than 100 borings for soil samples, some up to 300 feet deep, and more than 300 surveys of buildings and other structures along the tunnel route. This information, along with the other analysis completed, also helps to identify and manage risk.

The legislation authorizing WSDOT to proceed with the project obligates

two billion eight hundred million dollars. Although the legislation also has a provision that those in Seattle who benefit from the project should be responsible for cost overruns. WSDOT interprets this as a statement of legislative intent that would need clarification to become operative.

I-126-003

Extensive studies of the buildings, the soils and the construction methods indicate that Pioneer Square buildings will not sink. Settlement damage is anticipated to occur to only two buildings at the beginning of the tunnel: the Western and Polson Buildings. Final EIS Appendix I, Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources, discusses the steps to protect these two buildings. It also describes the steps that have been take to evaluate risk and minimize damage along the entire tunnel alignment. Buildings and structures (both historic and non-historic) along the alignment have been inspected and evaluated by structural engineers. The construction process includes extensive monitoring of each building and structure before, during, and after tunneling. This will enable any settlement impacts to be detected immediately so that they can be prevented or minimized. If damage does occur to historic buildings, it will be repaired according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties.

I-126-004

Eleven properties would be partially or fully acquired for the Bored Tunnel Alternative, as discussed in Chapter 5, Permanent Effects, of the Final EIS. When acquiring property, WSDOT would follow the amended provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Polices Act of 1970. This act implements federal and state constitutional guarantees that private property will not be taken or damages for public use without just compensation. As described in Chapter 3, Alternatives Description, the Bored Tunnel includes a westerly extension of Dearborn Street in the south portal area. This improvement would increase east-west connectivity between the historic

Pioneer Square and Greater Duwamish MIC neighborhoods and enhance the accessibility to existing land uses, such as the sports stadiums, ferry terminal, and waterfront businesses. In the north portal area, surface streets would be reconfigured and improved, including connecting John, Thomas, and Harrison Streets so that they intersect with Aurora Avenue and provide pedestrians and vehicles access across this street. The connections would extend from Sixth Avenue N. to Dexter Avenue N. Pedestrian sidewalks would be maintained along both sides of Aurora Avenue.

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.

Additional King County Metro transit service will be provided as part of construction mitigation. Improvements to the speed and reliability of transit service will also be supported by the project and continue to be in place after construction is completed. While some added travel time would be incurred by buses under the Bored Tunnel Alternative, transit operations would still be maintained. The project would not be supporting ongoing transit expansion following construction completion. However, transit service enhancements are expected in downtown Seattle; for example, Sound Transit light rail and commuter rail expansion under Sound Transit 2 and the King County Metro RapidRide bus program.

The Bored Tunnel Alternative would not bypass Seattle. This alternative would have ramps in the Stadium area that would provide access to the downtown business core; traffic using the Stadium area ramps to access downtown would disperse over several city arterials, including the improved Alaskan Way, First, Second, and Fourth Avenues. Also with this alternative, Alaskan Way would be reconfigured as part of a separate project led by the City of Seattle. This project would result in

different access opportunities to downtown.

The Final EIS and Appendix C, Transportation Discipline Report, contain current information related to local access and transit service for each build alternative.