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Angela Angrove
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Re Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project
Final EIS

I-006-001

I have briefly reviewed the EIS. My comment concerns the proposed decommissioning of the existing Battery Street Tunnel and demolition of its attendant fly-over from Western Avenue to Alaska Way. While I have previously expressed the opinion that this combined facility should be kept in tact as a two lane structure (currently six lanes on the fly-over and four lanes in the tunnel itself), I understand from the EIS that demolition of the fly-over is pretty much a "done deal" under the plan. So I will constrain my remarks to the tunnel itself.

I believe that this should be kept "on ice" for further use as funds become available. For instance such a tunnel could be valuable as a bike/bus (or other transit mode) link between SR99 and Western Avenue in some ways reminiscent of the Snoqualmie Pass bike (formerly railroad) tunnel. In the past this region has unfortunately lost various rights of way, such as that associated with the Interurban, that cannot now be recovered. However, more recently, and fortunately, we have acquired Burlington Northern Railway ROW which is being put to good recreational use. And while the Battery Street Tunnel (and its fly-over) may not look like much now, the example of the Highline in Manhattan shows that, with creativity, a formerly drab, obsolete, industrial facility can be metamorphosized into a delightful community asset.

Sincerely,



Cc: Steven Holl Architects

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Reuse of the Battery Street Tunnel was briefly considered during alternative development, but the facility needs substantial reconstruction to make it safe for public use, and the costs involved are prohibitive.