

1 Linda  
2 Seattle, Washington

H-051-001

3  
4 First of all, they're using highway funds for  
5 urban renewal, which I think is illegal, because if  
6 they tear down the viaduct, they're planning on doing  
7 urban renewal, so that means highway funds are being  
8 inappropriately appropriated.

9 And secondly, for lack of foresight on part of  
10 Mayor Nickels and his predecessors, they haven't set  
11 aside money for the infrastructure of the City. It's  
12 not a very glamorous thing to put money aside for,  
13 but they have not maintained the seawall. Now  
14 they're asking for highway funds to repair and  
15 replace the seawall, and cleverly on their part,  
16 including it as the western wall of the tunnel so  
17 that what was city infrastructure is now becoming a  
18 state highway problem, and I think that again is  
19 illegal use of highway funds.

20 Another thing I'd like to add, that recently  
21 Boeing was involved, engaged in a contract to put I  
22 believe it was people on the moon, and interestingly,  
23 the budget that was allocated for it was \$4.2  
24 billion, and the City is asking for \$4.2 billion  
25 dollars to build a highway that's less than two miles

Public Hearing, 9/13/06 - Comments by Linda

7

### H-051-001

Funding infrastructure maintenance and replacement, such as for this project, is a long-standing challenge for many jurisdictions and agencies such as WSDOT and the City of Seattle. Please note that the lead agencies have identified the Bored Tunnel Alternative as the preferred alternative for this project. If this alternative is selected, the replacement of the seawall would occur under a separate project, the Elliott Bay Seawall Project, led by the City of Seattle. See the Final EIS for current project information, including estimated cost for all of the proposed build alternatives.

H-051-001

1 long, and I think there's something definitely wrong  
2 with that.

3 I think that Seattle is asking for funds -- that  
4 amount of funding from their taxpayers and not taking  
5 into consideration all the other issues that need to  
6 be addressed in this city, and they're not building  
7 it to expand traffic but just maintaining what we  
8 have.

9 I just drove on the viaduct this evening, and  
10 part of it was four lanes and part of it was three  
11 lanes, and it was completely jammed in both  
12 directions and moving very slowly, and to spend \$4.2  
13 billion to just put us in the same situation only  
14 under the water seems to me a very poor decision on  
15 the part of our city leaders.

H-051-002

16 Another issue is that we come to these meetings  
17 and it feels that as citizens of this city, we really  
18 don't have any say in the matter. It's being always  
19 sold the program with your fancy drawings, and  
20 they've already decided that that's what they're  
21 going to do. They just now have to keep trying to  
22 convince the public. The public really doesn't have  
23 much say in the matter. It's just a question of  
24 making a decision by the politicians to provide  
25 opportunities for developers to make a lot of money

## H-051-002

The purpose of the EIS public hearings is to provide information to the public and to solicit public comments such as this. The comments are part of the information considered by the federal, state, and local officials responsible for making decisions on the project.

H-051-002

1 rebuilding the city over and over again and for the  
2 developers to keep the elected officials in office by  
3 getting those kinds of contracts.

H-051-003

4 It doesn't feel right, and I've seen people's  
5 taxes going up and continuing to go up, if all these  
6 measures pass, to the point that it will be a city  
7 where children are not comfortable here because young  
8 families are not able to live here and older people  
9 are also not going to be able to live here because  
10 they can't afford to pay the taxes on their  
11 properties.

12 Many of them have lived here and stuck with this  
13 city for 30, 40, 50, 60 years, and it will become  
14 just a place for young people that have moved here  
15 that make a lot of money and nothing looks really  
16 totally acceptable to a wide range of diversity of  
17 population, not only cultural diversity, but people  
18 of diverse ages and diverse incomes.

H-051-004

19 I am in favor of maintaining the viaduct. I  
20 don't know that most people in the city truly believe  
21 the things that you hear on some of the public  
22 hearings that are aired on public radio about that  
23 Mother Nature is going to destroy the viaduct,  
24 according to our head of Department of Transportation  
25 throwing out terms like that to the general public

### H-051-003

Taxes are affected by many factors that this project cannot control. The project is working with the local businesses and residents to mitigate the impacts of construction as described in Appendices G (Land Use Discipline Report) and L (Economics Discipline Report) of the Final EIS. Neighborhoods are discussed in Appendix H, Social Discipline Report.

### H-051-004

The lead agencies recognize that retrofitting highways, roadways, and bridges is often a viable option to counter earthquake threats. However, unlike other bridges and structures in the area, it isn't practical to retrofit the viaduct by only strengthening one or two structural elements. Fundamentally, such fixes transfer the forces from one weak point in the structure to another, and the viaduct is weak in too many places. The concrete frames, columns, foundations, and even the soil under the structure don't provide enough strength by today's standards. The lead agencies have studied various retrofitting concepts, and all of these concepts fail to provide a cost-effective, long-term solution that adequately addresses the risks to public safety and the weakened state of the viaduct. The lead agencies also determined that retrofitting 20 percent of the viaduct as discussed for the Rebuild Alternative is not reasonable.

H-051-004

1 when, in fact, that's a vague statement that doesn't  
2 mean anything.

3 And because of the way that the viaduct was  
4 constructed, I don't think you can use examples of  
5 San Francisco and other places where there's been a  
6 collapse because this viaduct is built in sections  
7 and it has turns in it, which makes it stronger.  
8 There have been a number of engineers who have  
9 studied it, and their opinion is that it's sturdy and  
10 will withstand many more years.

11 So usually a study has the results of what it is  
12 the people doing the study want to hear. For  
13 example, a cigarette company, tobacco company  
14 determining that cigarettes don't cause cancer is  
15 what you feel like what's happening, all the  
16 arguments about why the viaduct is about ready to  
17 collapse.

18 There's only about three or four or five  
19 sections, pillars of viaduct that need repair, and  
20 that kind of repair is done on a number of other  
21 bridges in the city, and it seems that you could  
22 repair those sections for a fraction of the cost and  
23 probably have a structure that you can rely on for  
24 the next fifty years. And by that time, who knows  
25 what kind of transportation issues we might have.

H-051-004

1 People might use hovercraft to get to work or do a  
2 lot of telecommuting, and I think that we're going  
3 back and looking historically at things like tunnels  
4 and subways and using that old technology and not  
5 looking at things that might happen in the future.

H-051-005

6 I would add that this is public funds and,  
7 therefore, there seems to be no limit, but you've got  
8 privately held commercial buildings all around the  
9 viaduct that are also part of the infrastructure that  
10 might be in jeopardy if, in fact, the seawall is in a  
11 state of disrepair. And you don't hear anything  
12 about those kinds of structures having to be replaced  
13 or repaired soon because there just isn't the funds  
14 to do it, but the taxpayers are an endless source of  
15 money for our politicians. Always going to be more  
16 money there. You never have to worry about limited  
17 funds or limited budgets because you can just  
18 increase the taxes.

H-051-006

19 And there are other bridges in the city that they  
20 say that if we don't replace the viaduct we're going  
21 to end up with a collapse and killing, you know,  
22 hundreds and thousands of people, but by the time  
23 they get done with this tunnel, it's possible that  
24 you might have that structure standing and everything  
25 else in the city is down. So yeah, you might have a

**H-051-005**

The lead agencies are committed to ensuring that the state, local, and federal public funds are spent effectively.

**H-051-006**

WSDOT developed a technique for cost estimating, called the Cost Estimate Validation Process, or CEVP, in 2002. This process is being used across the state and has proven itself much more accurate than previous methods.

The bored tunnel cost estimate is based on CEVP. 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 program 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.

H-051-006

1 viaduct or a bridge or a tunnel that's  
2 earthquake-safe, but everything else in the city is  
3 going to collapse. What about I-5? What about all  
4 the other bridges and highways and buildings that are  
5 not up to the amount of earthquake protection that we  
6 expect to have within a structure on Highway 99?

7 The Department of Transportation has a history, a  
8 very sorry history in this state of poor prediction  
9 and planning for bridges and highways and staying on  
10 budget and staying on time. And, you know, the Hood  
11 Canal Bridge, the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, and with  
12 that in mind and what we know about "Big Dig" in  
13 Boston, there's no possibility that this project is  
14 going to come in on time and on budget. History will  
15 tell you it's not going to happen.

H-051-007

16 But once you're committed, you've torn down the  
17 viaduct to start on the tunnel, then you're stuck.  
18 You've got to spend whatever money, millions of  
19 dollars and years and years and years to complete the  
20 project. And who's going to pay for it? Anybody who  
21 can still afford to live in the city.

22 Since this evening is about the Environmental  
23 Impact Statement, I would have to say that I think  
24 that just as a novice, you would have to know that  
25 trying to build an underground underwater tunnel on

**H-051-007**

The multi-disciplinary project team is well aware of the many challenges you describe. These issues, including archaeological and cultural resources, geologic and soils conditions, etc., are discussed throughout the Final EIS. These issues are also factored into the project's design budget.

H-051-007

1 the shore of the city of Seattle where it was fill  
2 and it was an estuary at one point, it's a swamp  
3 probably, and you've got the tides coming in, and you  
4 might have had Indian burial grounds in the area. I  
5 mean, there's just so many big red signs that say  
6 this is going to be a problem that's not going to go  
7 easy and it's guaranteed it's going to go over budget  
8 and we're going to run into environmental issues.

H-051-008

9 And once the tunnel, if it ever was completed, I  
10 don't think that it's going to truly be safe because  
11 there's potential for a disaster with an earthquake  
12 that might cause part of it to crumble.

H-051-009

13 The other issue I think is the cost to maintain a  
14 tunnel like that out in the Sound, that constant  
15 maintenance that would be required as compared to the  
16 maintenance that's never been done on the viaduct and  
17 it's still a smooth-running highway and it, for the  
18 most part, handles traffic. There's no opportunity  
19 for head-on collisions. All part of the day except  
20 after 5:00 until about 6:00 it handles the traffic  
21 well. It's a beautiful gateway into the city and out  
22 of the city, and I don't think people feel safe in a  
23 tunnel out in the crumbling seawall in the city of  
24 Seattle.

25

### H-051-008

The preferred Bored Tunnel Alternative is a safe alternative. Generally, structural engineers agree that tunnels are one of the safest places to be during an earthquake, because the tunnel moves with the earth. No Seattle tunnels were damaged during the 2001 Nisqually earthquake, including the Mt. Baker and Mercer Island I-90 tunnels, Battery Street Tunnel, Third Avenue Bus Tunnel, and Burlington Northern Tunnel.

The bored tunnel would be built to current seismic standards, which are considerably more stringent than what was in place when the viaduct was built in the early 1950s. The bored tunnel design includes improving relatively soft, liquefiable soils found near the south tunnel portal. Emergency exits would be provided every 650 feet in the tunnel. 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.

### H-051-009

Maintenance costs for alternatives have been calculated and are included in the overall cost estimates. The Bored Tunnel Alternative would have a stacked configuration with northbound and southbound traffic completely separated so head-on collisions would be unlikely. Please note that the deteriorating seawall would be replaced under the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project if the Cut-and-Cover Tunnel or Elevated Structure Alternative is selected. Replacing the seawall would be a separate project if the Bored Tunnel Alternative is selected, because the failing seawall does not have the potential to affect the seismic stability of this alignment. Please see Chapter 3 in the Final EIS for a description of the current configuration for each alternative in the project area.