

September 21, 2006

Ms. Kate Stenberg
AWV Environmental Manager
AWV Project Office
999 Third Avenue, Suite 2424
Seattle, Washington 98104

Dear Ms. Stenberg:

L-018-001

The position of the majority of the Seattle City Council (7 of 9 members) regarding the Alaskan Way corridor is that all through-Seattle traffic should travel underground from Atlantic Street to Roy Street and that Alaskan Way should receive no net gain in width or roadway.

In January 2005, the Seattle City Council passed and Mayor Greg Nickels signed Resolution 30726 declaring the Tunnel Option as the City's Preferred Alternative for replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct/Seawall Project (the Project) and expressing preferences for the design and development of the project. We ask that, as you further study the opportunities for the waterfront, you also analyze and address the following considerations addressed in this resolution:

L-018-002

1. **North End - Battery Street Tunnel to Highland Drive** - One element of this resolution states our preference that SR99 (Aurora Avenue) be rebuilt below the surrounding street grade between the north end of the Battery Street Tunnel and approximately Highland Drive and that Mercer, Republican and Harrison Streets be constructed to cross SR99 at the surrounding street grade to reconnect the street grid and reconnect South Lake Union to lower Queen Anne.

Allowing the street grid to be reconnected would strengthen connections to the South Lake Union, Uptown/Queen Anne, Belltown and Waterfront neighborhoods. It would also be a solution to the decades-long Mercer Street problem that is part of a tangle of roads weaving through the South Lake Union neighborhood providing access from I-5 to the Seattle Center.

This area has experienced transportation and community development challenges including backed-up surface roads and freeway off-ramps with an especially unsafe weaving pattern for cars exiting I-5; difficult circulation within the neighborhood, particularly for freight; unsafe and unpleasant bicycle and pedestrian movements; a barrier to South Lake Union Park and other lake front attractions; and a confusing route to navigate to the Seattle Center, which is a major regional destination.

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L-018-001

FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle recognize that the Seattle City Council voted the Tunnel Alternative to be their preferred alternative in January 2005. However, after the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS was published, there was not a consensus on how to replace the viaduct along the central waterfront. In March 2007, Governor Gregoire, former King County Executive Sims, and former City of Seattle Mayor Nickels initiated a public process called the Partnership Process to develop a solution for replacing the viaduct along the central waterfront. Details about the project history are described in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS. Because the project has evolved since comments were submitted in 2006, please refer to this Final EIS for the current information.

In January 2009, Governor Gregoire, former King County Executive Sims, and former Seattle Mayor Nickels recommended replacing the central waterfront portion of the Alaskan Way Viaduct with a single, large-diameter bored tunnel. After the recommendation was made, the Bored Tunnel Alternative was analyzed and compared to the Viaduct Closed (No Build Alternative), Cut-and-Cover Tunnel, and Elevated Structure Alternatives in the 2010 Supplemental Draft EIS. The comments received on the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS, subsequent Partnership Process, and the analysis presented in the 2010 Supplemental Draft EIS led to the lead agencies' decision to identify the Bored Tunnel Alternative as the preferred alternative for replacing the viaduct along the central waterfront.

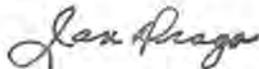
L-018-002

The lead agencies appreciate receiving your comments supporting the lowering of Aurora Avenue and constructing bridges above the roadway to reconnect some of the local surface streets. The concept of enhancing neighborhood connections across Aurora Avenue has continued to be among the improvements being considered as part of the project. See

- L-018-002** | WSDOT has previously sanctioned this design. We believe that maintaining this design is vital to the health of the adjacent neighborhoods, as well as the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Mercer Street replacement projects.
- L-018-003** | 2. **North lid** - A lid should be constructed above the highway from Pike Street to the Battery Street Tunnel and across the entire width of the gulch that is created by the highway. We also support the plan to have the highway travel under Elliott and Western Avenues.
- L-018-004** | 3. **Southern tunnel portal** - Analysis should be done toward moving the southern portal of the tunnel to a point south of Atlantic Street.
- L-018-005** | 4. **South lid** - A lid should be constructed over the highway from King Street, south to Royal Brougham creating space for parks and mixed use buildings on top of the traffic.
- L-018-006** | 5. **No net increase in speed on Alaskan Way** - The speed limit on Alaskan Way should be no more than 30 mph. Traffic lights should be set to move traffic between 22 and 28 mph, in accordance with other downtown avenues.
- L-018-007** | 6. **No ferry queuing on Alaskan Way** - No additional lanes should be constructed on Alaskan Way or any other pedestrian or traffic-oriented street near the waterfront.
- L-018-008** | 7. **One great downtown park** - Analysis should be done to identify a space for a large, center city park, located south of Pike. Consideration should be given to acquisition of the surface parking lot located between Spring and Seneca, Western and Alaskan Way, as a potential highway construction site and subsequent city park.

L-018-009 | In conclusion, we recognize that the major landowners along the waterfront are each public entities, holding the land in the public trust. We call upon WSDOT, the Port of Seattle and the Department of Natural Resources to work cooperatively with the City of Seattle, as well as to value and consider the quality of life aspects of our new waterfront.

Sincerely,



Councilmember Jan Drago
Chair, Transportation Committee



Councilmember Jean Godden
Member, Transportation Committee

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the Final EIS for the current configuration of each proposed build alternative north of the Battery Street Tunnel.

L-018-003

A lid was incorporated into the design of the 2006 Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternative and evaluated in the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS. It was included in the project, due in part to numerous 2004 Draft EIS public comments requesting the lead agencies to consider a lid in the Pike Place/Belltown area. The proposed lid would extend north from where SR 99 emerges from the tunnel's north portal near Pine Street to Victor Steinbrueck Park near Virginia Street. The design for this lid structure with the current Cut-and-Cover Alternative is described in this Final EIS and in Appendix B, Alternatives Description and Construction Methods Discipline Report.

L-018-004

The south portal location has been analyzed by the design team for the preferred alternative, which is the Bored Tunnel Alternative, and the Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternative. The configuration of the tunnel requires that on- and off-ramps access the tunnel from the tunnel portals. Moving the tunnel portal south would force the on- and off-ramps into the existing railyards. This option is not feasible given the current rail operations and rail traffic.

L-018-005

A lid over SR 99 from King Street to S. Royal Brougham Way was not proposed as it would be cost-prohibitive and would not increase pedestrian connections between pedestrian activity areas. The addition of a lid would essentially extend the tunnel and would require similar support facilities for ventilation, fire suppression, and emergency egress. This structure would have similar costs per linear foot as the tunnel. In addition, because the area in question is bordered to the west

by the Port of Seattle's marine container operations, a pedestrian lid would not link the stadium areas to a destination.

L-018-006

The speed limit along the Alaskan Way surface street is currently 30 mph, the standard speed limit for arterial streets in the City of Seattle. The Bored Tunnel, Cut-and-Cover Tunnel, and Elevated Structure Alternatives, the three build alternatives carried forward to the Final EIS, do not propose to change the speed limit along the Alaskan Way surface street. Traffic signals on Alaskan Way for the Cut-and-Cover Tunnel and Elevated Structure Alternatives would be designed to help facilitate safe and efficient traffic flow along the corridor. The Bored Tunnel Alternative does not include the Alaskan Way surface street as part of the project.

L-018-007

The build alternatives have been refined since the 2006 Supplemental Draft EIS, and neither the Cut-and-Cover Tunnel Alternative nor the Elevated Structure Alternative include ferry queuing on Alaskan Way. The preferred Bored Tunnel Alternative does not include the Alaskan Way surface street as part of the project. The final design of the waterfront will be determined by the Central Waterfront Project being led by the City of Seattle and will be coordinated with Washington State Ferries.

L-018-008

The Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project does not include specific plans for new park and recreation facilities or specific waterfront amenities because the purpose for the project is to provide a replacement transportation facility that meets current seismic standards and improves traffic safety, among other things.

The City of Seattle is leading the Central Waterfront Project to redevelop

the waterfront. The exact configuration and types of activities on the waterfront will be decided during the planning and design process for that project. There will be opportunities for the public to participate in that master planning effort and to determine the future of their waterfront.

L-018-009

The lead agencies, including the City of Seattle, have worked cooperatively and collaboratively with the major landowners along the city's waterfront since the beginning of the project. The Port of Seattle and the Department of Natural Resources, along with many other local and state agencies have been included continuously in meetings and planning discussions with the lead agencies and staff, and will continue to do so, as the final project design is completed.