

From: Donna Williamson [mailto:williamson_d@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, November 05, 2010 2:05 PM
To: AWV SDEIS Comments
Subject: comment about Tunnel Project

Dear WSDOT-

I-155-001

Seattle has the worst designed transportation system in the west coast. We have no history of supporting mass transit projects such as BART, MAX rail or any other extensive rail systems (our new, limited, light rail system was just recently implemented), which has given any viable alternative to the single occupied vehicle. Even the design to add light rail to the floating bridges to relieve the heavily traffic spewing in and out of the East side has been hampered with lawsuits by Kemper Freeman. Trying to get agreement from any of the competing interest on the design of capitol transportation projects never seems to happen. It's amazing how long it takes to get any transportation project approved and constructed in Seattle, it's a nightmare. I am getting so frustrated with the lack of progress, that I just want to see the ball keep rolling on any project that has any type of momentum at all. Sure, there are pros and cons to each design. I'll be the first to admit that I will miss that beautiful view driving in from the airport on 99 that makes my heart melt and has me renewing the love my city each time I see the stunning view of the high rises and waterfront, but I can live without it. If I don't like a tunnel, I can take Highway 5 instead. I just want to keep the ball moving, so a tunnel design is great, go for it. Just keep the costs from escalating out of control of the budget, and the proposing of a toll on the tunnel is just a joke. We are trying to improve conditions to keep the traffic moving on the roadways, not add to the congestion. I would approve of tolls on roadways going East, but not any that go north-south. It's a joke that there is only one freeway going north-south. Highway 99 has become that much needed alternative freeway, so we need to keep the majority of traffic moving without congestion. There isn't as much traffic moving in the east-west direction, and the majority of that traffic is funneling into Microsoft. Microsoft employees have alternatives to driving their cars to work (they have small vans shuttling people to the East Side campuses can use), and besides, with their salaries, they can afford the east side bridge tolls. So aside from all the ranting here is my vote:

- Tunnel design-YES
- Controlling costs of the Tunnel Project-A MUST
- Tolls on the Tunnel-NO
- Tolls on the East side bridges-YES

Sincerely,
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FHWA, WSDOT, and the City of Seattle appreciate receiving your comments on the Bored Tunnel Alternative. The analyses regarding how tolls might be implemented as part of the proposed action were preliminary for the 2010 Supplemental Draft EIS but have been updated for the Final EIS. They will be further refined during final design through a joint planning effort (described below) should the state legislature authorize tolls on the SR 99 Bored Tunnel. The analysis in the Final EIS represents a conservative estimate of the impacts of tolling 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 the City of Seattle, 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.