

From: eddiw@speakeasy.net [mailto:eddiw@speakeasy.net]
Sent: Saturday, December 11, 2010 8:18 PM
To: Alaskan Way Viaduct
Subject: AWV DEIS comment

WSDOT AWV team,

- I-152-001** Thank you for publishing the DEIS. Please consider the following comments.
- I-152-002** 1. What mitigation will be implemented to address the many rats that will be displaced during construction and demolition of the project? The residential and commercial areas near the AWV could be impacted.
- I-152-002** 2. The project will take out several hundred parking spaces. Please consider an additional mitigation measure. While the recession stalls development, the former north lot of the Kingdome is in use as long term parking. While the project takes out short term parking in Pioneer Square, WSDOT could lease about 200 spaces from the owners of the north lot and allow them to be leased by the Pioneer Square business association as short term parking.
- I-152-003** 3. During several years of the project construction, SR-99 will be reduced to two lanes in each direction. It will become congested. The congestion on SR-99 will lead to traffic diversion and slow transit service that uses the AWV to and from the south. Please ask the Legislature for permission for "early" tolling on SR-99 (parallel to the early tolling on SR-520 to be implemented in spring 2011). Gantries could be placed at the Elliott Avenue on ramp, the Battery Street tunnel entrance, and northbound north of South Spokane Street. Please ask the Legislature for permission to toll all lanes of I-5 in King County. WSDOT needs to raise at least \$2 billion to fund rehabilitation of I-5. The tolling of the project will be more effective if I-5 is also tolled.
- I-152-004** 4. The DEIS partially describes the January 2009 agreement between Governor Gregoire, Mayor Nickels, and Executive Sims. A key part of the agreement is not emphasized sufficiently: the one percent MVET for Metro Transit. Under the agreement, it was intended to fund three important parts of the program: transit capital, transit service related to the project, and to fill in the decline of sales tax revenue necessary to fund the baseline level of transit service. Metro is closer to a fiscal cliff due to the recession and the decline of its sales tax revenue. If this element of the agreement was enacted, it would significantly reduce the Metro fiscal crisis. Much of the baseline level of service, a high portion of which serves downtown Seattle, the project area, will disappear if the funding crisis is not addressed. Implicit in the agreement is Executive Sims' understanding of the upcoming fiscal crisis. The project will benefit bypass trips. Improved transit service is necessary to improve the transit mode share in downtown Seattle. The DEIS does not seem to measure the impact of not enacting this key element of the January 2009 agreement. How much service will be cut? What will happen to the transit mode share in downtown Seattle? How much more congested will the downtown surface streets become? The DEIS seems to assume not only the program elements, but also the baseline level of transit service.
- I-152-005** 5. The transit capacity of downtown Seattle is constrained. It has been measured by the number of outbound buses and trains departing downtown Seattle in the p.m. peak hour. The limiting factors are curb space for loading buses, the sidewalk area for intending passengers, the

I-152-001

Thank you for your comments. The project team does not expect to need mitigation measures to address rats. Mitigation measures for the project are described in Chapter 8 of the Final EIS and in Appendix N, Wildlife, Fish, and Vegetation Discipline Report.

I-152-002

Private development of the Qwest Field North Lot is still planned, so the project does not anticipate being able to use that space for project or mitigation purposes.

The lead agencies recognize that businesses along the central waterfront, Western Avenue, and Pioneer Square rely on the short-term parking in the area. The City of Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), in coordination with the project, has conducted parking studies as part of the process to develop mitigation strategies and better manage the city's parking resources. SDOT's studies identified a number of strategies to offset the loss of short-term parking in this area, including new or leased parking and the increased utilization of existing parking. Although the mitigation measures would be most needed during construction, many of them could be retained and provide benefits over the longer term. Specific parking mitigation strategies have not yet been determined, but the project has allocated \$30 million for parking mitigation. The parking mitigation strategies will continue to evolve in coordination with the project and community partners. Parking measures under consideration and refinement include:

- Encourage shift from long-term parking to short-term parking
- Provide short-term parking (off-street), especially serving waterfront piers, downtown retail, and other heavy retail/commercial corridors
- Implement electronic parking guidance system
- Provide alternate opportunities to facilitate commercial loading activities

I-152-005

throughput of the transit tunnel, the throughput of the north-south avenues (e.g., 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th), the throughput of the key east-west streets connecting the north-south avenues with I-5 (e.g., Stewart, Howell, and Virginia streets, and Olive Way), and the capacity of several key intersections at the ends of the north-south avenues (e.g., 2nd Avenue Extension South and 4th Avenue South at South Jackson, and 4th Avenue and Olive Way). The project will degrade the transit capacity of downtown Seattle by diverting general purpose traffic to the north-south transit corridors during construction by decreasing the lanes on SR-99, and after project completion, through tolling. The constraints on downtown Seattle transit capacity may not be relaxed until ST Link is implemented in north Seattle at NE 45th Street, Roosevelt, and Northgate, and bus service can be restructured. That is expected in about 2021. WSDOT could help mitigate the impact of the project by improving transit flow. Please consider limiting the Stewart Street reversible ramp to HOV, as the other downtown I-5 reversible ramps are limited. This would reduce the SOV traffic on Stewart and Howell streets and Olive Way and improve transit flow. The SOV trips on the reversible Stewart Street ramp may shift to the I-5 general purpose ramps or to transit. The tolling of I-5 outlined in comment 3 above could also improve transit flow on I-5 and on key arterials leading to I-5 interchanges. Also, please address in the cumulative impacts section, the impact of the planned First Hill streetcar on the transit capacity of South Jackson Street and the north-south avenues of 2nd Avenue Extension, 4th, and 5th. The streetcar plans seem to take lanes on South Jackson Street and affect all three intersections.

I-152-006

6. The project includes the closure of the Battery Street Tunnel and filling it with rubble. Should Seattle chose to add it to its program, please be open to converting the BST to a transit way to and from the north and transit layover to and from the south with ramps to and from 3rd Avenue. This addition to the Seattle program would save the project the cost of filling in the BST. The off street layover could replace valuable curb space in Belltown. The transit ramp to and from the north would take many thousands of transit riders past the choke point of Denny Way, a place where the street grid shifts. Reuse of the BST would improve transit flow on several important transit routes. Only one new crossing of Aurora Avenue North would be lost if the BST was retained for transit use.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Jack Whisner

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- Develop a Center City parking marketing program
- Use existing and new social media and blog outlets to provide frequent parking updates
- Establish a construction worker parking policy that is implemented by the Contractor

Refer to the Parking Mitigation during Construction section in Chapter 6 of the Transportation Discipline Report (Appendix C of the Final EIS) for additional information.

I-152-003

The lead agencies appreciate your suggestions. Project financing is not included in an environmental impact analysis, though it does guide decision-making. Therefore, the Final EIS will not change as a result of your suggestions, but they have been noted by the lead agencies.

I-152-004

The agreement signed by the Governor, County Executive, and Mayor in January 2009 described a program of independent yet complementary projects for replacing the Alaskan Way Viaduct and providing a strategy for overall mobility in Seattle. The State is responsible for replacing the viaduct, the City for the seawall and central waterfront, and the County accepted responsibility for additional RapidRide and express bus service, with some identified as construction mitigation. These future transit service improvements have benefits independent of replacing the Alaskan Way Viaduct. WSDOT recognizes the funding anticipated in the agreement has not been realized, and that the recent economic downturn has reduced other funding sources King County currently relies on for providing transit service throughout King County.

Currently WSDOT is providing funding for King County on the S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project to provide

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Sent: Monday, December 13, 2010 11:10 PM
To: Alaskan Way Viaduct
Subject: AWV Feedback

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Comments:

I-152-007

WSDOT AWV Replacement, Please consider the following comments on the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project 2010 SDEIS. One Many rats will be displaced by the project. How will that be mitigated?

Two The project will cause the loss of several hundred parking spaces. The former north lot of the Kingdome is slated for development, but is now used for long-term parking. The development may be stalled by the recession. Consider mitigation for the loss of short-term parking in Pioneer Square by providing about 200 spaces from the western half of the former north lot to the Pioneer Square business association for use as short-term parking.

Three The transit capacity of downtown Seattle is constrained. The constraint will not be relaxed until about 2021, when Sound Transit Link LRT is implemented to the Northgate, Roosevelt, and Brooklyn stations, allowing the restructure of north Seattle transit service. The transit capacity is measured by the outbound buses and trains leaving downtown Seattle in the peak p.m. hour. There are several constraints: curb space for buses, sidewalk area for intending passengers, east-west streets connecting the north-south avenues with I-5 (e.g., Stewart Street, Olive Way, and Howell Street) intersection capacity (e.g., 4th Avenue and Olive Way, South Jackson Street and 2nd Avenue Extension South, South Jackson Street and 4th Avenue South), lane capacity on 2nd, 3rd, and 4th avenues, and, transit tunnel capacity. The project will impact the capacity during construction and after opening. During construction, traffic will probably divert to downtown Seattle streets away from congestion on SR-99, as it will be reduced by one lane in each direction. After completion, the project will be tolled and traffic is expected to be diverted to downtown Seattle streets. WSDOT could help mitigate the constraints on transit capacity by restricting the Stewart Street ramp with the I-5 reversible lanes to HOV only, as the other downtown ramps are restricted. This would improve the flow for transit on Stewart Street, Olive Way, and Howell Street and their intersections. The SOV traffic using the Stewart Street reversible ramp could shift to HOV, transit, or other ramps.

Four The project seems to require \$400 million in toll revenue. The Legislature must first authorize the tolling. During construction, SR-99 will become more congested due to a reduction in lanes. Please consider asking the Legislature for authority to toll SR-99 during

additional transit service hours to help mitigate the effects of construction. This program is ongoing and regularly monitored to evaluate its effectiveness. For the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project, WSDOT will continue to evaluate the need for increased bus service in the West Seattle, Ballard, Uptown, and Aurora Avenue corridors during the initial portions of the construction period, as well as a bus travel time monitoring system. WSDOT will also work with the County to identify funding sources for the service originally contemplated in the January 2009 agreement.

I-152-005

The transportation analysis in the Final EIS, including effects on public transit, incorporated key assumptions regarding future (2030) services and facilities. The assumptions for public transit were based on transit operator development plans such as Sound Transit 2 and the King County Metro RapidRide enhanced bus service. This approach is similar to other travel forecasting conducted in the region.

I-152-006

King County Metro worked in cooperation with the City of Seattle several years ago to identify key transit pathways. The pathways and the new Rapid Ride service are the main focal points for any new Metro service; the Battery Street Tunnel does not lie on any of these pathways and therefore would not be projected to serve any great need.

The cost of constructing new ramps to serve a very short section of tunnel would likely be considerably more than the cost of decommissioning the Battery Street Tunnel. It would require additional right-of-way and cause considerable construction disruption in Belltown. Additionally, bus stops at Denny Way are needed but would be precluded by running buses in the Battery Street Tunnel. The project has been coordinating with Metro Transit to address transit concerns. Refer

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construction and not just after project completion. The early tolling would be similar to that authorized for the SR-520 project in spring 2011. Early tolling would help the AWV project with both demand management and revenue. Also please consider asking the Legislature for authority to toll I-5. The general-purpose lanes are congested in both directions and in both peak periods, especially southbound in the afternoons. Tolling could help with both demand management and revenue. WSDOT needs about \$2 billion to repair I-5 through Seattle.

Five The project would close the Battery Street Tunnel (BST) and fill it with rubble. Please be open to its reuse if Seattle expands its program to include transit functions for the BST. If ramps connected the BST roadway with 3rd Avenue in both directions: to and from the north, it could be a transit way for routes on Aurora and Dexter avenues North; to and from the south, it could be used for transit layover, replacing many blocks of curb space in the Denny Regrade. The project would be less costly by not having to fill in the BST.

Six The DEIS outlines the January 2009 agreement between Governor Gregoire, Mayor Nickels, and Executive Sims. The description omits a key provision: the one percent MVET for Metro Transit. The revenue from the one percent MVET is needed for three purposes: transit service and transit capital in the program and to backfill the decline in sales tax due to the recession. Without additional service subsidy, the underlying transit serving downtown Seattle will be reduced by the Metro fiscal crisis. The program is dependent upon the underlying network. The project improves bypass trips. The January 2009 agreement included transit improvements for the trips oriented to downtown Seattle.

Thank you for considering these comments.
Jack Whisner

to the Final EIS Appendix C, Transportation Discipline Report for more information on transit.

I-152-007

Please see the responses to your previous comments.