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Learning and Listening

Replacing the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall

On January 13, 2009, Governor Gregoire, King County Executive Sims and Seattle Mayor Nickels announced their recommendation to replace the central waterfront portion of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall. The recommendation includes a new waterfront surface street, an approximately 1.7 mile deep bored tunnel beneath downtown, transit investments, and downtown and waterfront city street improvements.

How was the recommendation developed?

The recommendation is based on the results of an in-depth technical analysis and extensive discussions with stakeholders conducted during the past year.

Starting in late 2007, the three executives established an independent project team to identify and assess a wide range of options for replacing the aging viaduct. Any solution for the central waterfront was to be grounded in the state, county and city's recognition of, commitment to, and integration across a set of six guiding principles:

- Improve public safety.
- Provide efficient movement of people and goods now and in the future.
- Maintain or improve downtown Seattle, regional, the port and state economies.
- Enhance Seattle's waterfront, downtown and adjacent neighborhoods as a place for people.
- Create solutions that are fiscally responsible.
- Improve the health of the environment.

Additionally, the state, county and city departments of transportation formed a Stakeholder Advisory Committee to gather comments on potential central waterfront solutions. The committee was made up of 29 representatives from various constituencies and community groups, including business, neighborhood, freight, commuters, environmental and other interests. The committee met 16 times during a 13-month period.

During 2008, public meetings were held quarterly, more than 50 community briefings were made, and over one thousand public comments were received. These meetings and briefings provided an opportunity for the agencies to gather public feedback on the information as it was being developed.



The viaduct is vulnerable to earthquakes and continues to show signs of age and deterioration. It must be replaced.

Fact sheets are available on other projects, including:

- Column Safety Repairs
- Electrical Line Relocation
- South End: S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project
- Transit Enhancements and Other Improvements



For More Information:

Visit the Web site at:

www.alaskanwayviaduct.org

Call the hotline:

1-888-AWV-LINE

Send an e-mail to:

viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov

Send a letter to:

Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall
Replacement Program
c/o Washington State
Department of Transportation
999 Third Avenue, Suite 2424
Seattle, WA 98104

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What options were considered?

Initially, eight scenarios were developed as possible solutions. The state, county and city transportation agencies approached the problem by looking at the entire system of streets, transit service, and freeways from Lake Washington to Elliott Bay, and from NE 85th Street in the north to Seattle's city limits in the south. Each scenario covered a range of replacement options, from a surface street along the central waterfront with significant investments in transit and surface streets, to various bypass roads with a waterfront surface street and fewer transit and surface street improvements. The original eight scenarios were:

- A. Surface boulevard – demand management and low capital
- B. Surface boulevard and transit
- C. Alaskan Way and Western Avenue couplet
- D. Independent elevated
- E. Integrated elevated
- F. Bored tunnel
- G. Cut-and-cover tunnel
- H. Lidded trench

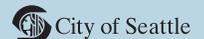
In December, WSDOT, King County, and the City of Seattle released the I-5, surface and transit hybrid alternative and elevated bypass hybrid alternative for comment

by the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, elected officials, interest groups, and the public. These hybrids were selected because they were the lower cost options and provided mobility for people and goods, although in different ways.

Based on support from the Stakeholder Advisory Committee and public for the bored tunnel to move forward for further consideration, the governor, executive and mayor asked their departments of transportation to complete further analysis of a bored tunnel. Based on that analysis, the three executives recommended the bored tunnel. With the executives' recommendation of a bored tunnel hybrid, the state, county and city departments of transportation will move forward with implementation.



WSDOT, King County and the City of Seattle took a fresh look at the central waterfront and how to replace the viaduct between the Battery Street Tunnel and S. King Street.



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