



December 31, 2012

Chris Swenson, Chair
Seattle Special Events Committee
Office of Economic Development
PO Box 94708
Seattle, WA 98124

Dear Mr. Swenson,

As construction related to the replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct (AWV) is ramping up significantly, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) has been working with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to facilitate efficient work on the project and to limit mobility impacts to our center city to the extent possible.

Consistent with those efforts, effective August 31, 2013 SDOT and WSDOT will no longer approve permits for events on State Route 99 that require full or partial closures of the Alaskan Way Viaduct (from the Battery Street Tunnel to South Spokane Street). We will make exceptions for four large events until August 31, 2013, which are as follows: 1) Hot Chocolate Run 5 km & 15 km, 2) Rock 'n Roll Marathon; 3) Seafair Torchlight Run; and 4) the Seattle Marathon 10 km.

Beyond August 31, 2013, we will allow only the Seafair Torchlight Run and the Rock 'n Roll Marathon to continue using the AWV in order to minimize the impact to the traveling public. After August 31, 2015, we expect to transition Viaduct traffic to the new deep bored tunnel, and the AWV will no longer be available for any events.

Why will special events be prohibited from hosting events on the viaduct?

Partial and total closures of the viaduct have a more significant and lasting effect on regional traffic than they have in the past. WSDOT's SR 99 Tunnel project has reduced the capacity along one of Seattle's only north-south corridors through downtown, both on the AWV as well as on Alaskan Way (surface street), a street typically used as an alternate route through downtown Seattle when the AWV is closed. Over the next four years, construction near the AWV is expected to intensify as several major contracts begin work along Seattle's waterfront. Combined with ongoing work in the Mercer Street corridor and significant construction on or adjacent to the center city, this will further limit capacity on key alternate routes.



Successful completion of the Alaskan Way Viaduct Program is critical to shaping Seattle's transportation future. As we enter this next phase of more intensive construction, this work must take priority over events that would use the AWV. Continuing to allow the use of the AWV for events could result in costly construction delays.

What can special events do to keep traffic moving on the Seattle street grid?

To keep traffic moving on city streets, special event organizers must provide drivers with reliable access to and from Seattle neighborhoods. Routes for several past events in downtown Seattle have confined drivers along Seattle's waterfront by closing many east-west streets. Future event routes will not be approved unless they ensure the public is able to easily enter or leave neighborhoods before, during and after events.

SDOT and WSDOT understand that this decision will affect multiple routes for many of Seattle's events, and that developing new routes for these events will be challenging. At the same time, given that the AWV will be unavailable to any events after August 31, 2015, this gives event organizers certainty they need to start their planning as soon as possible. We are happy to meet with event organizers to discuss options and answer any questions they may have. Please contact my office at 206-684-5000 if you have any questions or would like to have further discussions on this matter.

Sincerely,



Peter Hahn, Director

Seattle Department of Transportation

Cc: Matt Preedy, WSDOT
Dave McCormick, WSDOT
Mike Merritt, Port of Seattle
Victor Obeso, King County Metro