

Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program
South Portal Working Group – Feb. 1, 2012
Meeting Summary

Working Group Attendees

- Linda Anderson, Amalgamated Transit Union
- Michael Beranbaum, Joint Council of Teamsters No. 28
- Kris Breton, Compass Housing Alliance
- Alan Cornell, Nitze-Stagen
- Barbara Culp, Bicycle Alliance of Washington State
- Jason Handaly, Sound Produce
- Ron Kieswether, Oak Harbor Freight Lines
- Don Newby, Burien
- John Odland, MacMillan-Piper
- Vlad Oustimovitch, West Seattle
- Susan Ranf, Seattle Mariners
- Pete Spalding, Delridge
- Herald Ugles, International Longshore and Warehouse Union and Pacific Maritime Association

Working Group Members Not in Attendance

- Jerome Cohen, West Seattle Chamber of Commerce
- Jan Drago, The Alliance for Pioneer Square
- John Huey, American West Bank and Duwamish Transportation Management Association
- Adam Link, CenturyLink Field and Event Center
- Marty Oppenheimer, South Park
- Lisa Quinn, Feet First
- Ed Shilley, Nucor Steel

Agencies and Staff in Attendance

- Linea Laird, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
- Matt Preedy, WSDOT
- Bob Chandler, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)
- Mike Johnson, SDOT
- Ron Posthuma, King County Department of Transportation (KCDOT)
- Mike Merritt, Port of Seattle

Agenda Item #1 – Welcome and Introductions

Linea Laird, WSDOT Program Administrator, welcomed the working group members and the public to the meeting. She explained a shift in the focus of the working groups to construction activities, schedules and potential impacts. New members to the group were introduced.

Agenda Item #2 – Meeting Objectives and Guidelines

Linea reviewed the meeting objectives and guidelines, noting that working group members will be relied upon to share information with the broader community.

Agenda Item #3 – Overview of Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program

Linea gave an overview of the AWW program and project construction timelines, and reviewed the SR 99 construction bypass and the SR 99 tunnel. She noted that much of the landscaping and design work for the tunnel portals and new Alaskan Way street is underway.

Agenda Item #4 – Agency Coordination and Construction

Matt Preedy, WSDOT Deputy Program Administrator, Bob Chandler, SDOT Major Projects Division Director and Mike Merritt Port of Seattle Manager of Local Government Relations, discussed interagency coordination, outreach activities with the community and construction updates.

Agency Coordination and Community Outreach

AWV program staff meet weekly with partner agencies and private developers to coordinate construction activities. Attention is also given to special events schedules at the stadiums and Seattle Center. The agencies are working to ensure that information on their websites is consistent and up-to-date.

WSDOT works with bicycle, freight, social service provider, parking and property owner groups. Working group members are encouraged to provide feedback on potential construction conflicts, and to disseminate information from these meetings to their constituencies.

Milepost 31 in Pioneer Square is a place for the public to find more information about the project and learn about the development of transportation in the neighborhood.

North End Construction Activities

Through early 2012 construction in the north portal area will include site excavation and utility work. In mid-2012 Seattle Tunnel Partners will demolish the Cedarstrand office building, which will be the site of the tunnel operations building. Utility relocation work will continue intermittently throughout 2012. The majority of impacts in 2012 will be short-term lane closures on local streets.

For the City's Mercer East project, eastbound Mercer Street traffic has been switched onto the new lanes built north of the existing lanes. This traffic shift restricts access to Mercer Street from the south. Eastbound Broad Street remains closed.

Central Waterfront Construction Activities

Seattle City Light is relocating electrical transmission lines from the viaduct into underground vaults, which involves short-term on-street parking removal. WSDOT and the City are working with a stakeholder group to identify mitigation for the reduced parking. Seattle Tunnel Partners is relocating utilities south of Yesler Way, and this work will continue into December 2012.

Beginning spring 2012, work along the central waterfront will include reinforcing sections of the viaduct to limit settlement due to tunneling, installing micropiles and widening Alaskan Way. Tracks from the old waterfront streetcar will be removed to accommodate traffic during construction. Detours will remain in place on Alaskan Way and under the viaduct during construction activities.

Barbara Culp: What is the plan for the bike/pedestrian path along the central waterfront?

Answer: That path is a continuation of the new one next to our South Holgate Street to South King Street project. It will be maintained in some form during construction, though its configuration will change during the various stages.

Barbara Culp: What is your mitigation plan as you move the path and it conflicts with cars?

Answer: We will institute additional traffic control measures when needed. The project area will be a dynamic environment, so as we progress with construction we will do our best to inform bicycle commuters before and during any changes.

Herald Ugles: In order to head north after leaving Colman Dock, would a driver take a left turn under the viaduct?

Answer: There will be signals under the viaduct at Marion Street and at Yesler Way for drivers turning left to head north.

Herald Ugles: If I'm driving southbound on Alaskan Way, will I be able to access the ferry lanes?

Answer: Yes. During peak periods we can expand the holding lane capacity using traffic directors.

Herald Ugles: What is the capacity of the two ferry holding lanes?

Answer: Up to 100 vehicles. We are working with ferries to improve dock management in order to accommodate more cars there as well.

Herald Ugles: Has the capacity of the ferry lane holding lanes been reduced because of parking mitigation efforts for ferry employees?

Answer: The dock has always had employee parking spaces. They have additional lot attendants who encourage ferry passengers to park closer together in the holding lanes, which provides room for additional vehicles.

Herald Ugles: Will there be signs on southbound Alaskan Way directing people to the ferry lanes in order to minimize back-ups?

Answer: There will be signage to indicate access to the ferry lane from the right southbound lane and access to Alaskan Way South from the left lane.

Herald Ugles: Will you remove the trolley tracks to provide more room for vehicles?

Answer: Yes, we are already planning that. We are also looking at extending the track removal further north with different uses in mind, such as offsetting parking removal impacts.

Herald Ugles: How will you dispose of spoils from tunnel launch pit excavation?

Answer: We will use trucks to haul spoils via a special road to South Atlantic Street.

Herald Ugles: How many truck loads, hours and round trips per day are you planning?

Answer: Seattle Tunnel Partners will begin with 15 truck loads a day for guide wall and secant wall excavation. Truck traffic will increase once pit excavation gets underway.

Susan Ranf: To where are the spoils being taken?

Answer: A location has not yet been identified.

Susan Ranf: Can you use East Marginal Way South to access South Spokane Street? South Atlantic Street is becoming a congestion nightmare.

Answer: The haul road does not connect to East Marginal Way South. Seattle Tunnel Partner's contract limits the number of trips their haul trucks can make during peak hours.

Susan Ranf: Does it limit the number of trips during pregame and post game periods?

Answer: WSDOT will coordinate with the stadiums around game day schedules.

Jason Handaly: Do you plan to meet with other owners besides the stadiums and Seattle Center in the neighborhoods affected by construction?

Answer: Yes, we are doing extensive outreach in the project construction area.

South End Construction Activities

Upcoming construction in the south end includes utility relocation near South Royal Brougham Way, continued work on the second SR 99 bridge, and rebuilding East Marginal Way South. The contract for the South Atlantic Street overcrossing will be advertised in March, with construction starting in late spring. Equipment is arriving for the tunnel launch pit site, and a noise wall has been constructed to reduce sound and distractions for drivers on the SR 99 construction bypass.

Westbound traffic on the Spokane Street Viaduct was shifted onto the new bridge deck in December 2011. Additional traffic shifts will be implemented in the coming months. Project completion is expected in summer 2012.

The Airport Way South Viaduct closed in November 2011 in order to replace its north and south approaches. Work is anticipated to continue for 12-14 months. The East Marginal Way Overcrossing project is nearing completion and is expected to finish in February 2012.

John Odland: At the bottom of the South Atlantic Street overcrossing, your design doesn't show a north/south crosswalk.

Answer: There will be a north/south crosswalk across the entrance to Terminal 46.

John Odland: Do you think southbound bike commuter traffic will be heaviest at rush hour in the evening, when the terminal is typically closed?

Answer: Yes. Terminal 46 typically closes at 4:30 p.m.

John Odland: What type of traffic signals will be at this crossing?

Answer: Cyclists on the trail will have to push a button to get a signal to cross the street.

John Odland: How many bikes will choose to travel southbound on the overcrossing instead of the bike path?

Answer: The trail is lighted, so we think many people will use it, though some bikes will still feel safer on the road.

John Odland: Has WSDOT thought about making the traffic signal more conducive to truck traffic when a train is blocking the intersection?

Answer: We will coordinate the traffic signals at the intersections of First Avenue South and South Atlantic Street, South Royal Brougham Way and South Spokane Street. This will provide a smooth progression through the system.

Pete Spalding: Can you install signs on the SR 99 construction bypass that remind drivers that a solid white line means changing lanes is not permitted? Lane changing is creating backups there.

Answer: We will look into it. Normally, solid white lines are accompanied by a directional sign.

Pete Spalding: When driving southbound on the viaduct, the South Atlantic street exit sign should be placed sooner. Drivers don't have enough time to prepare for that exit, which causes more backups.

Answer: We'll look into either adding a sign and/or a flag or light to the current sign.

Pete Spalding: During the recent Spokane Street Viaduct closure, there were no signs to indicate the roadway was closed. During the next closure, what will be the status of the First Avenue South and Fourth Avenue South ramps?

Answer: SDOT plans to have those ramps as well as the lower Spokane Street bridge open during the closure.

Pete Spalding: SDOT's messaging around the closure was confusing. All attention was focused on the Mercer Street closure.

Answer: We will change our approach for the next closure.

Vlad Oustimovitch: You said the Spokane Street project will open this summer, but can you be more specific?

Answer: The opening is planned for the end of July.

Pete Spalding: What is the status of the road being built off the lower Spokane Street bridge?

Answer: That is the East Marginal Way Grade Separation Project. The Port anticipates holding a grand opening ceremony in March or April 2012.

Agenda Item #5 – Action Items and Adjourn

Linea wrapped up the meeting. All presentations and materials will be available on the program website, and the meeting summary will be emailed to the working group members.

Action items:

- WSDOT will provide information to the working group about haul routes and schedules.
- SDOT will provide information on the timing of construction on South Spokane Street.
- WSDOT will look into improving signage on the SR 99 construction bypass and for the exit to South Atlantic Street.