



## SR 99 Elevated Bypass Hybrid Scenario

WSDOT, King County, and the City of Seattle are working together to find a solution for the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall's central waterfront section. After developing and evaluating eight scenarios, or comprehensive solutions, for the central waterfront, the three transportation agencies created two hybrid scenarios that combine the most promising components of the earlier scenarios. These hybrids include not only investments on the central waterfront, but also investments in I-5, transit, surface streets, and demand management. Further analysis will be done on investigating a bored bypass tunnel.

Governor Christine Gregoire, King County Executive Ron Sims, and Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels are committed to reaching agreement on a solution by the end of 2008, and to begin taking down the central section of the viaduct in 2012. Regardless of what solution is chosen, we are moving forward to remove or repair about half of the viaduct in the south and north ends.

The following describes one of the two hybrid scenarios. The other is an I-5/surface/transit hybrid scenario.

### What is the SR 99 elevated bypass hybrid?

The SR 99 elevated bypass hybrid would run along the waterfront on two independent bridge structures, side-by-side, with two lanes in each direction. It would connect to the existing Battery Street Tunnel in the north and the new south end project at S. King Street. Alaskan Way would be placed under the elevated structures with two lanes in each direction with turn lanes.

North of the Battery Street Tunnel an underpass would be built at Republican Street in order to reconnect the street grid in the north. Mercer Street would also become

two-way between I-5 and Elliott Avenue. In the south end the Spokane Street Viaduct would be widened and an off-ramp would be built at Fourth Avenue S. Because this is a limited access



Aerial view near Victor Steinbrueck Park looking south.

bypass facility, there are fewer I-5, surface street and transit improvements than in the I-5/surface/transit hybrid scenario.

Transit improvements include an emphasis on peak period service. This would include increased service on Metro's RapidRide routes for Ballard/Uptown, Aurora Avenue and West Seattle and a new route on Delridge Way. The waterfront streetcar would be replaced with a new First Avenue line between S. King Street and the Seattle Center. Park and rides would be expanded in Burien, White Center and Shoreline. Improvements would be made to the Rapid Trolleybus Network to the waterfront and express and local service would be added during peak periods.

Changes to I-5 would allow for more efficient operations through downtown. Improvements include allowing general purpose traffic to use the southbound HOV lane between Mercer Street and S. Spokane Street during peak periods; automating the express lane switch-over; converting the Stewart Street express lane ramp to HOV only; converting the Cherry Street and Columbia Street express lane ramps to general purpose; and implementing additional active traffic management.

A number of transportation policies would be introduced to change how people travel. These would include a parking management system and variable meter pricing. Smart, or adaptive, traffic signals would be introduced, and incentives for alternative commutes would be increased.

### **Why is it still being considered?**

This scenario is put forward for further consideration as it offers a lower-cost bypass option to meet transportation needs in a manner that most closely meets the SR 99 functions provided today. The four-lane design streamlines the footprint of the elevated structure along the waterfront, thereby allowing for a promenade between 20 and 70 feet wide. It is expected to have limited to no long-term adverse economic impacts within the waterfront and region, and would provide freight a clear path for moving goods – including flammable items – along a limited access facility. Other advantages include:

- It is the lowest-cost bypass alternative studied.
- Strategic improvements to I-5 are expected to improve the functionality of that highway.
- Emphasis on peak period transit improvements would improve overall system capacity and reduce single-occupancy commuters.
- Alignment eliminates concerns associated with traffic circulation patterns in Pike Place Market, and cruise ship needs related to shift to Piers 90/91.

## How much will it cost?

	<b>Capital cost (escalated to year of expenditure)</b>
SR 99 independent elevated and seawall replacement	\$ 1,662 million
Changes to I-5	\$ 103 million
Changes to city surface streets	\$ 234 million
Transit improvements	\$ 267 million
Transportation policies and management	\$ 37 million
<b>Scenario total</b>	<b>\$ 2.3 billion</b>
Construction traffic mitigation	\$ 130 million
Alaskan Way Viaduct's Moving Forward projects and prior program expenditures	\$ 1.1 billion
<b>Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program total</b>	<b>\$ 3.5 billion</b>

Note: Total annual operating costs for this scenario would be \$48 million in 2008 dollars.

## What are the potential issues that will need further analysis?

- Additional funding necessary.
- Managing traffic during stadium events.
- Parking loss partially replaced by 300-space joint use facility on central waterfront.
- Access from West Seattle to downtown.
- Construction traffic management for waterfront business and SR 99 users.