



Key Findings – September 25 Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Teams from the Washington State Department of Transportation, King County, and the City of Seattle have begun evaluating each of the eight central waterfront scenarios for the Alaskan Way Viaduct. For example, how much open space do they provide along the waterfront and what are expected freight travel times? These measures are based on the guiding principles established by Governor Gregoire, King County Executive Ron Sims, and Mayor Greg Nickels, with input from the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, Interagency Working Group and the public.

Discussion this evening on how the various scenarios:

- Meet seismic design standards
- Meet design life standards
- Affect shading and views
- Provide transit access to the waterfront
- Affect historic structures and districts
- Prevent stormwater pollution
- Improve nearshore habitat

What did we learn?

- All eight scenarios can be designed to withstand earthquakes.
 - All structural elements are being designed to current standards.
 - They will not collapse or flood in the event of an earthquake that has the chance of occurring once every 1,000 years.
 - We can design all of the new structures to the same 75-year design life.
- All scenarios offer improvements to current transit access to the waterfront. The most important factors separating scenarios for transit were service frequency and service directly on the waterfront.
 - Without the Alaskan Way streetcar, transit access on the waterfront suffers.
 - First, Second, and Third Avenues provide access with more frequent service than Alaskan Way.
 - The waterfront streetcar provides a valuable service to connect Colman Dock and waterfront locations.
 - Wayfinding system is necessary to get people to transit.

- Surface and below ground scenarios open views between downtown and the central waterfront.
- The elevated options would have similar shading impacts as the existing viaduct. The integrated elevated would block views from the city to the waterfront as well as vehicles on the viaduct would have less view than today because of the enclosing of the structure. Pedestrians would have a view from the lid on top.
- All scenarios are likely to have some impacts to historic buildings or districts due to increased traffic and transit service, especially in Pioneer Square. Some construction impacts may be difficult to avoid.
 - Surface and tunnel scenarios have fewer impacts to historic resources.
 - Scenarios with an Alaskan Way/Western couplet would require relocation of a historic building.
 - The new viaduct has impacts similar to the existing structure.
 - The integrated elevated scenario separates the central waterfront pier district from other historic buildings and districts. It appears this impact cannot be substantially reduced without fundamentally altering the scenario.
 - We have more planning and design work to do to determine what can be done to address the historic resources.
- All scenarios will improve stormwater quality by eliminating direct discharge without treatment. Scenarios with more open space and fewer lanes may have more opportunity for natural drainage (surface street scenarios, cut and cover tunnel and lidded trench).
- Nearshore habitat is also not a distinguishing factor between the scenarios:
 - All scenarios have similar opportunities to improve aquatic habitat conditions along the central waterfront.
 - Opportunities for enhancing habitat are generally greater where there is a relatively shallow water habitat adjacent to the existing seawall.
 - Potential habitat improvements include: removing the existing Pier 48 structure, developing an intertidal beach along Waterfront park pier, developing an intertidal beach north of the Seattle aquarium.

What's next?

In November, you can expect to see more information on how each scenario handles traffic, transit speed and reliability, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, and both short-and long-term economic implications. We will also have cost estimates available in November.

Meeting materials, including presentations, from the Sept. 25 Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting can be found at: www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/Viaduct/library-meetingmaterials.htm.