



The Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement Program



Fairs, Festivals and Farmers Markets Summary Summer 2007

Overview

The Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program hosted an informational booth at 24 fairs, festivals and farmers markets throughout the Seattle area during this past summer. Approximately 2,800 festival attendees visited the program's booths to ask questions, make comments or read materials.

The team participated in these events with the objective to engage members of the public, especially those who may not attend formal informational briefings or public meetings. The team also sought to raise awareness of the program, answer questions and collect feedback.

The booth featured a freestanding tri-fold display, which described an overview of the six Moving Forward projects and showed their locations along SR 99. A general folio describing the early action projects and six fact sheets highlighting each project in detail were also displayed at the program table. Translated copies of the general folio were available in Vietnamese, Mandarin Chinese, Tagalog and Spanish.

A sign-up sheet was available for visitors who wished to receive monthly program updates through mail or e-mail. Throughout the summer, 213 festival attendees signed up for the program mailing list.

To attract more visitors to the booth, team members also offered Washington state road maps, magnets and branded pens that promoted the program and the program hotline.

Themes and commonly asked questions

Questions asked at fairs, festivals and farmers markets often varied from questions received at other public outreach events. Unlike questions asked at community briefings or public meetings, questions at fairs and festivals tended to be more about general program happenings.

Most festival attendees had limited knowledge about current program happenings. Once informed about the early action projects, visitors were often enthusiastic about the program getting started with construction.

Throughout the summer, booth visitors were also concerned about the viaduct's safety and questions about safety increased after the Minneapolis bridge collapse in August. Visitors were especially interested in the upcoming projects because they understood these actions will increase the viaduct's safety.

The majority of visitors asked about the program's current status and the decision making process for the viaduct's central waterfront section. Many festival attendees were curious about the program's decision makers, the timeline for a decision on viaduct's middle section and the options being considered. People also asked about program cost and funding.

Community members also wanted to know when construction would begin, if this would cause traffic delays, and what actions would be taken to minimize disruptions.

Frequent comments

The team received a wide variety of comments from booth visitors throughout the summer.

Many comments focused on the six Moving Forward projects. Visitors often commented on details of the projects and the timeline for construction. Festival attendees were also concerned if their preferred central waterfront replacement option would still be possible after the projects' completion. In addition to commenting on the purpose and need of these projects, visitors also remarked on the projects' funding and cost. Comments about the six Moving Forward projects included:

- I think the repairs on bents 93 and 94 at Columbia and Yesler should last a long time because we don't know for sure if the viaduct will be removed in 2012.
- I don't think every replacement option will work if these projects are completed.
- Mass transit is really important so the sixth project should get more funding.
- Starting early is a good idea.
- I don't understand how you can start all these projects when the vote failed.
- It seems very expensive to move forward with these projects without knowing what you're replacing the viaduct with.

Festival attendees also expressed their preference or dislike towards a replacement option for the viaduct's central section. Visitors most often commented on a tunnel, elevated structure or surface street replacement option.

While some visitors wished for a tunnel replacement because of its opportunity for green space, others were concerned about the cost of this option. Comments about the tunnel replacement in the central waterfront included:

- Think about the benefits from tourism and invest in green space.
- A tunnel would look lovely with a park on top of it.
- A tunnel is not safe.
- A tunnel would be too expensive.

Visitors who preferred an elevated structure did so because they believed traffic conditions would improve the most with this option. However, others disliked the look and sound of an

elevated highway. Comments about the elevated structure replacement in the central waterfront included:

- The elevated structure serves a purpose because it makes traffic better.
- I like the elevated viaduct and use it everyday to commute from Ballard to West Seattle.
- An elevated viaduct is ugly and makes the waterfront ugly.
- The elevated structure leads to too much noise.

Several fair attendees expressed their opinion on a surface street replacement option. Some attendees preferred a surface option because of aesthetic reasons while others believed a surface street would impair traffic conditions. Comments about the surface street in the central waterfront included:

- A surface street would look much better than another elevated highway.
- A surface street would have better views for everybody.
- A surface option would just create deadlock.
- No other city would build a highway along the waterfront. Other cities with waterfronts get to enjoy them.

In addition to commenting on replacement options in the central waterfront, many visitors were appreciative of the information and being able to ask questions during the fair, festival or farmers market. Comments included:

- Thanks for being here!
- It is nice to see you out here with information.
- We appreciate you being present at community events.

Visitors also expressed frustration with the length of the decision making process. Comments included:

- I don't want you to put off making a decision until the viaduct falls down on its own.
- I don't want to fight about the viaduct like they fought about the monorail.
- They are taking too long to make a decision about the viaduct. .

Finally, festival attendees also expressed concerns for the safety of the viaduct. Following the I-35 bridge collapse in Minneapolis, comments about safety increased. Comments included:

- The viaduct will fall down in an earthquake.
- I'm afraid for the pedestrians who walk below the viaduct.
- With the Minnesota bridge collapse, there is no doubt the viaduct needs to be replaced.

Promoting environmental justice

As part of the program's commitment to environmental justice, the program team attended several fairs and festivals targeted towards traditionally underrepresented communities. The program team offered translated folios in Vietnamese, Mandarin Chinese, Tagalog and Spanish during every fair, festival or farmers market. At the Chinatown-International District Festival, three youth interpreters from the Wilderness Inner-city Leadership Development (WILD) program were also hired to assist the team at the booth. The interpreters, who were bi-lingual and fluent in Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese and Vietnamese, provided verbal translations for 30 booth visitors.

Environmental Justice Events	Visitors
Pagdiriwang Philippine Festival	100
Hispanic Seafair	44
Chinatown-International District Festival	195
Central Area Community Festival	61
Total	400

2007 Fairs and Festival Summary			
Event	Date	Visitors	Newsletter Sign-ups
University District Street Fair	19 & 20-Jun	350	20
Pagdiriwang Philippine Festival	9 & 10-Jun	100	10
Fremont Fair	16 & 17-Jun	320	20
Magnolia Farmers Market	23-Jun	45	5
West Seattle Farmers Market	24-Jun	40	6
Hispanic Seafair	1-Jul	44	3
Broadway Farmers Market	1-Jul	52	2
Pioneer Square Fire Festival	7-Jul	35	8
Wallingford Farmers Market	11-Jul	5	0
Chinatown-International District Festival	14 & 15-Jul	195	15
West Seattle Summer Fest	13,14 & 15 -Jul	450	45
Boeing Safety Fair (Seattle Development Center)	18-Jul	27	3
Maple Leaf Summer Social	25-Jul	35	1
Picnic at the Pier Concert Series	27-Jul	15	0
Ballard Seafood Festival	28 & 29-Jul	320	20
Boeing Safety Fair (Seattle Plant)	3-Aug	17	0
Magnolia Summer Festival	3 & 4-Aug	182	12
Magnolia Farmers Market	11-Aug	35	6
West Seattle Farmers Market	12-Aug	50	8
Central Area Community Festival	18 & 19-Aug	61	3
Broadway Farmers Market	26-Aug	45	6
Columbia City Farmers Market	29-Aug	38	3
Queen Anne Farmers Market	30-Aug	40	8
Bumbershoot	1, 2 & 3-Sept	279	29

Totals:

2780

233



The Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program booth at the Bumbershoot music festival, September 1 – 3, 2007.



On July 14, 2007, Hoa Ta and XinXian (Yuki) Liang helped interpret program information for booth visitors at the Chinatown International-District festival.