

From: [fnharvey](#)
To: [NW South Viaduct EA](#);
CC:
Subject: Environmental Assessment Comments
Date: Friday, August 01, 2008 9:24:34 AM
Attachments:

I-010-001 Having read the environmental impact statement on the southern part of the AWV, I must comment about an inaccuracy that I noticed. While it is true that the visual impact or views while driving south on it won't be substantially different, going north is a whole other story. Under the EIS, side-by-side traffic means that southbound traveling trucks and buses would obstruct the views of those traveling northbound.

Currently traveling north gives magnificent views (serendipitously provided by the original AWV designers) that are so spectacular that they merit "United Nations Heritage Drive" designation. Starting at Holgate, we see the Coast Guard pier and the Pier 46 cargo containers and cranes to the west and soon the baseball field and football stadium to the east. As we get higher, we see the Olympic Mountains and Puget Sound with its tankers, ferries and pleasure craft to the west and to the east the varied architecture of the city. But the view doesn't stop here at S. King St. even tho the project does; to the west is even more of the Sound, mountains, and water traffic, and to the east more city, up close and personal. When passing the Ferry Terminal, we get a glimpse to the north of how ugly the city could become when development is allowed right to the water. True, after Pine Street, the views aren't so special, but the EIS was about the South End of the AWV, not the entire thing.

Clearly, the view is many times better when traveling on the viaduct, compared to surface, tunnel, or side-by-side, particularly heading north. Though not as extensive as the views discussed in the April 6, 2008 edition of the "Seattle Times Pacific Northwest Sunday Magazine" for rich condo buyers and businesses, the views that riding on the viaduct provides are DYNAMIC, offering a splendid slice of Seattle. Furthermore, this is public, not just for car/SUV users but open to anyone who can afford bus fare. Unlike land acquisition problems with

I-010-001

In Chapter 3 of the EA (p. 59), under the question "How would the project affect views?," the text states that "views from the new SR 99 roadway would not be substantially different than views from the existing viaduct. Motorists traveling northbound would still experience panoramic views of the downtown skyline." It goes on to state that for southbound SR 99 travelers, the "views of the stadiums and SODO area ... would improve somewhat with the new roadway configuration, because these views would no longer be blocked by the upper roadway."

Your preference for an elevated structure alternative solution continuing north through the downtown area, and the views that an elevated structure would provide, are noted and acknowledged here.

I-010-001 | monorail, this right-of-way is already in use; improving the elevated viaduct wouldn't require buying up lots of land. Visitors immediately recognize our quality-of-life from traveling north on the viaduct.

Furthermore, even if transportation no longer depends on fossil fuels, (for examples, either a return to animal use, or some type of ground-effects hovercraft,) the northbound view would still be spectacular and should not be given up to benefit greedy downtown interests.

Now that I've presented a case to maintain the views, let me discuss ways to do so. 1) depending on a positive outcome of the Miyamoto report, retrofit the existing viaduct all the way from the Battery St. tunnel to S. Holgate St.
2) modifying Scenario D slightly, have the elevated structures at different heights with the northbound lanes higher than the southbound lanes and extend this the entire length of the existing viaduct. It would appear that this would satisfy all the federal highway safety standards and satisfy the majority of viaduct users including Seattle-dwellers, all 500000+ not just those living downtown.

I-010-002 | I still think that demanding that the "South End" solution be applicable to any of tunnel, surface, or elevated side-by-side for the central waterfront and then claiming that the only solution that meets that criterion is what is described in the EIS, is removing the elevated double-deck viaduct by "stealth engineering".

Harvey Friedman fnharvey@zipcon.net

I-010-002

In the Environmental Assessment, the alignment evaluated between S. Holgate and S. King Streets would connect to the existing double-level viaduct near S. King Street. It would not preclude SR 99 from being replaced with a double-level structure in the central waterfront area. The State of Washington, King County, and the City of Seattle are working together to find a solution for replacing the central waterfront section of the viaduct.