

# Alaskan Way Viaduct **REPLACEMENT** PROGRAM



January 2016

## Two-week SR 99 closure coming in 2016

When Bertha, the SR 99 tunneling machine, tunnels under the Alaskan Way Viaduct, WSDOT will close the structure for approximately two weeks. The closure will extend from the Battery Street Tunnel south to the West Seattle Bridge. The contractor's latest projections show that this closure will occur in March 2016, but the actual date will depend on the rate of Bertha's progress.

WSDOT recognizes that closing a major highway will have regional traffic impacts. This is a necessary and planned step toward completing a project that will transform the city and region, and WSDOT and its partner agencies have developed a plan to prepare for expected traffic congestion.

### Why does WSDOT have to close the viaduct?

This temporary closure of the viaduct is precautionary. Removing vehicles from the structure will allow crews to better monitor the viaduct while Bertha mines underneath, and to quickly address any movement that might occur. Additionally, WSDOT recognizes that advertising a planned closure ahead of time, instead of conducting an unexpected and last-minute closure, will give the traveling public time to plan their trips accordingly.

### How will the viaduct be protected?

The viaduct is able to withstand some ground movement, and the project has implemented a comprehensive program to monitor and address settlement.

Sections of the viaduct have been reinforced with fiber wrap, and monitoring instruments on the viaduct and surrounding ground can detect movement in real time. Additionally, underground support walls hold soil in place between the viaduct foundation and Bertha's path.



*In 2012, crews installed steel micropiles underground to protect the Alaskan Way Viaduct from possible settlement during tunneling.*



*A monitoring device installed on the viaduct. Removing cars will make it easier for crews to monitor and respond to any movement they might detect.*

## What efforts are being made to keep traffic moving?

WSDOT and its partner agencies have developed a coordinated plan to ensure area highways and city streets are prepared for the increased traffic expected during the closure. During the closure the agencies will coordinate daily to minimize congestion through traffic management measures, proactive public outreach and media relations.

Specific efforts and strategies will be announced in the weeks leading up to the closure, but will include:

- WSDOT and SDOT will monitor highway and street traffic, and use permanent and portable electronic message signs to inform drivers about travel times and provide other information.
- WSDOT is working with transit partners to keep buses moving and share information about bus reroutes.
- Police officers may provide manual traffic control at key transit chokepoint intersections.
- WSDOT and its partner agencies will conduct extensive outreach in advance of the closure to help travelers prepare.

## Information sharing will keep traffic moving

WSDOT will be in frequent communication with the public and our partner agencies to help drivers make informed travel choices. Here are some ways you can avoid congestion and help keep traffic moving:

**Plan ahead:** Expect rush hour congestion to start earlier and end later. This occurred in 2011 during the last extended viaduct closure.

**Be flexible:** If possible, take an alternate route or travel at non-peak times. Also consider sharing a ride in a carpool or vanpool, or shifting travel modes and take the bus, walk or bike.

**Stay informed:** Follow the Twitter accounts at right, use the WSDOT, SDOT and King County Metro apps, follow local traffic reports, and regularly check the program website ([www.AlaskanWayViaduct.org](http://www.AlaskanWayViaduct.org)) for new information.

**Be patient:** While congestion will increase and traffic patterns will be disrupted, the closure is a necessary part of the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program, which is a vital transportation safety project that will transform the Seattle waterfront.



### How to stay informed

Official Twitter accounts will be a valuable way to learn about travel options before and during the closure:

- @BerthaDigsSR99
- @WSDOT
- @WSDOT\_traffic
- @kcmetrobus
- @seattledot
- Hashtag #99Closure

**Apps:** WSDOT, SDOT and King County Metro apps provide real-time travel information

**Questions?** Call or write the program:

- 1-888-AWV-LINE
- [viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov)

**Visit the website regularly:**  
[www.AlaskanWayViaduct.org](http://www.AlaskanWayViaduct.org)

### Americans with Disabilities Act & Title VI information

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information: This material can be made available in an alternate format by emailing the WSDOT Diversity/ADA Affairs team at [wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov) or by calling toll free, 855-362-4ADA (4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.

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