

Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program
Stakeholder Group – Jan. 12, 2016
Meeting Summary

Stakeholder Group attendees

- Warren Aakervik, Ballard Oil / Seattle Freight Advisory Board
- Linda Anderson, Amalgamated Transit Union
- Glenn Avery, Queen Anne Community Council
- Layne Cubell, Seattle Center (*in the place of Robert Nellams*)
- Matt Curry, South Lake Union Chamber of Commerce
- Michael Davis, Uptown Alliance
- Stephen DeForest, Magnolia Community Council
- Kyle Ducey, South Lake Union Community Council
- Tom Graff, Belltown Business Association
- Bree Moore, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Vlad Oustimovitch, West Seattle
- Susan Ranf, Seattle Mariners
- Don Smith, CenturyLink Field and Event Center
- Pete Spalding, Delridge

Stakeholder Group members not in attendance

- Jeff Aken, Cascade Bicycle Club
- Michael Beranbaum, Joint Council of Teamsters No. 28
- Barb Chamberlain, Bicycle Alliance of Washington
- Howard Cohen, Seattle Hotel Association
- Alan Cornell, Nitze-Stagen
- Jan Drago, Alliance for Pioneer Square
- Hamilton Gardiner, West Seattle Chamber of Commerce
- Phil Fujii, Vulcan
- Jason Handaly, Sound Produce
- Ron Hildebrandt, Trident Seafoods at Interbay
- Tim Hillis, Charlie's Produce
- Ron Kieswether, Oak Harbor Freight Lines
- Lee Newgent, Washington Building Trades
- John Odland, MacMillan-Piper
- Vince O'Halloran, Puget Sound Ports Council & Sailors Union of the Pacific
- Marty Oppenheimer, South Park
- Tom Phillips, Compass Housing Alliance
- Lisa Quinn, Feet First
- Ed Shilley, Nucor Steel
- Herald Ugles, International Longshore and Warehouse Union/Pacific Maritime Association
- Eugene Wasserman, North Seattle Industrial Association
- Elaine Wine, Ballard

Agencies and staff in attendance

- David Sowers, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Brian Nielsen, WSDOT
- Bernard van de Kamp, Seattle Department of Transportation
- Angela Brady, SDOT
- Jeff Bertram, SDOT
- Lindsay Wolpa, Port of Seattle

Agenda Item #1: Welcome and general updates

Bernard van de Kamp welcomed the group and did introductions.

Agenda Item #2 – Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program

David Sowers began by reviewing progress at the north portal, including concrete work on Sixth Avenue North, work on the receiving pit and the operations building.

Bree Moore: Do you know when Sixth Avenue North will open?

Answer: Crews are still finishing the paving, landscaping and sidewalks, and there's some utility work left to be done on Harrison Street. Work may be complete this summer but it could be later this year.

Matt Curry: On the southbound on-ramp from Sixth Avenue North, does the right lane merge with the other lanes? Is there an emergency parking lane?

Answer: The on-ramp lane merges with the other lanes in the tunnel. There's an eight foot shoulder as well.

Brian Nielsen summarized the work at the south portal. The focus of the work is to finish the northbound on-ramp at South Royal Brougham Way. This week STP is doing the last concrete pour for the lid and the walls of that roadway. STP is starting to install the glass exterior on the south operations building and they're working on the interior of the building as well.

Brian then explained recent steps taken to backfill the access pit that was built to repair the tunneling machine. The contractor filled the bottom of the pit with controlled density fill. Then they filled the pit to four feet above the top of the machine with sand compacted to match the soil outside the pit. The plan was to finish the backfill with soil, but the contractor elected to fill the last 30 feet with controlled density fill.

In the process of mining within the access pit, STP performed load tests similar to what would be met outside the pit. They did a number of tests and everything checked out well, so they mined through the wall. They mined one ring before Christmas, then after the holidays mined about 130 feet outside of the access pit.

Pete Spalding: What happened today with the barging issue on Terminal 46?

Answer: STP hasn't determined the root cause but we know that they released the barge to avoid further damaging Terminal 46. There was some damage to the pier and they're assessing how significant that was. They're currently in the process of unloading the barge onto another one. STP has three barges; one is broken, another one is docked at the pier near West Seattle and the third was at Matts Matts quarry, unloading some of the muck. They're planning to resume mining as soon as the third barge becomes available. STP is considering bringing in a log boom so they can start mining again.

Brian explained that in the next few weeks STP will mine towards safe haven three, an area of improved ground just south of the viaduct. STP designed safe haven three as a place to make adjustments to the machine using hyperbaric interventions. The plan is to spend between three and four weeks there, but the actual amount of time will be determined by STP during their inspection of the machine. After STP finishes work at safe haven three, we will close the viaduct to tunnel underneath it. It's expected to take approximately two weeks. That closure will probably happen in March, based on the contractor's current schedule. That date is subject to change but WSDOT will continue to communicate about updates.

STP still expects to complete mining around the end of 2016 or early 2017.

Pete: When they close the viaduct, what mitigations will you put into place?

Answer: Teams from SDOT, WSDOT and King County Metro are currently discussing traffic management methods. There are conversations occurring with private contractors to try to minimize additional lane closures. We're looking to create no-parking-zones to keep major arterials free. We're going to have Seattle Police Department enforce "do not block the box."

We're working with Metro to line up arterial service so that major routes can be improved. We still aren't going to be able to maintain the same travel time, so Metro will have additional coaches available. WSDOT is also trying to reassign their incident response teams to help clear incidents – they'll be deployed on parallel routes to keep traffic moving. What's really a challenge is that the schedule is variable – we want to make sure we're ready. That's one thing that I'd ask from you and people you know: to be ready depending on what we hear regarding the schedule of the closure.

Pete Spalding: How much lead time will people have before the closure?

Answer: Hopefully at least two to three weeks.

Lindsay Wolpa: What about water taxi service?

Answer: They have a new, larger boat that will be in operation and extra parking available near the dock as a park and ride. There are ongoing conversations between Metro, WSDOT and SDOT.

Pete Spalding: Is Metro going to reroute or are there extra shuttles available to get riders to the water taxi dock in West Seattle?

Answer: Metro is working on that issue but their fleet is very much at capacity right now.

- **Action Item: Follow up with Metro regarding water taxi shuttle options.**

Vlad Oustimovich: The West Seattle Bridge is one of the largest bottlenecks leaving West Seattle. The viaduct closure will cause additional back-ups. Can priority lanes be created to get people onto I-5 and to First and Fourth avenues? The lower bridge is an option but is often inaccessible because of barge traffic.

Answer: Agency staff are looking into various solutions to help keep traffic moving. We'll be looking at West Seattle as well.

Matt Curry: Will southbound drivers be detoured to Denny Way or Battery Street?

Answer: Denny Way. Historically Battery Street has been considered too narrow to accommodate all the traffic.

Pete Spalding: Will there be any restriction on traffic moving under the viaduct on Alaskan Way?

Answer: That's not planned, but if there's an issue that we don't expect, we could close portions of Alaskan Way.

Pete Spalding: Is the closure planned so there is less weight on the viaduct?

Answer: WSDOT is trying to monitor the viaduct very closely, and removing the traffic will help with monitoring. If there is a problem, we also want to be able to react quickly. It's an action with a lot of caution behind it. In the interest of public safety we think it's prudent.

Brian then went on to explain the final steps in the tunneling process. It will take some time to disassemble the machine after it drills into the retrieval pit at the north portal. The last concrete pour for the highway inside the tunnel will be in June 2017 and in April 2018 the testing and commissioning will be complete. The tunnel will then be ready and it will take several weeks to make the connections at both portals.

Dave closed the presentation with a discussion of the Aurora Avenue lane closures that will begin on Monday, Jan. 18. The lane closures are taking place just north of Mercer Street to the Aurora Bridge, and will allow workers to complete overhead sign foundations. In the first phase, expected to last four to five weeks, the median lanes will be closed in both directions. There are additional lane closures planned at night. In the second phase, the median lanes reopen with a short closure southbound between Galer and Comstock streets. At that location, buses will merge into the general purpose lanes. The overall duration of work is about seven weeks. WSDOT is asking drivers to plan ahead, be aware, anticipate heavy traffic, seek alternative routes and use alternative modes of travel if you can.

Layne Cubell: Seattle Center has been following this closure and we're worried about our evening and weekend events. We want to make sure you're communicating with us about when these happen. Over the weekend of Jan. 23 – 24, we want to make sure mitigation is being researched.

Answer: WSDOT, SDOT and Metro will be monitoring very closely and can make modifications as needed.

Matt Curry: On the schedule it showed more than a year of testing and commissioning for the SR 99 tunnel. I'm guessing that members of this group would like to see more details on that. I'm also not aware of any significant changes to the design for the North Surface Street Connections project but there has been interest in what that reconnection looks like. I believe that WSDOT and their partners at SDOT are at least 30% done with the design and I think this group would like to see what they have.

Answer: The team will resume design work for that project in late 2016 and early 2017. We certainly intend to engage the community members during future design milestones.

- **Action Item: Present activities to be completed during testing and commissioning of the SR 99 tunnel.**
- **Action Item: Present North Surface Street Connections design at future meeting.**

Agenda Item #3 – Waterfront Seattle

Angela Brady reviewed Waterfront Seattle's key accomplishments from 2015, and the plans for 2016. She explained that there are now two alternatives on the supplemental draft EIS based on the large public response. One new alternative would remove bus lanes on Alaskan Way, and the supplemental EIS will provide information regarding why that is not SDOT's preferred alternative.

Tom Graff: Will there dedicated bike lanes on the waterfront?

Answer: Yes, as a part of the promenade. They run the entire length.

Linda Anderson: Can you tell me more about eliminating the transit lanes? You mentioned the proposal to eliminate those.

Answer: SDOT evaluated the transit lanes along with two left turn lanes for ferry queuing in the EIS. We heard from the public that they wanted a narrower street. We wanted to let people know that we did consider that, and so we are including that alternative in the supplemental draft EIS. You will see a no action, a preferred alternative, and another alternative that shows what the roadway and traffic would look like if Alaskan Way were narrower.

Warren Aakervik: So there would also be buses stopping in general purpose traffic?

Answer: Yes. SDOT is not saying that this is going to happen, but that it will be included in the supplemental draft EIS. We have to go through the process of showing why we don't think this is a good idea. It's a due diligence analysis.

Agenda Item #4 – Elliott Bay Seawall Project

Jeff Bertram introduced himself and gave a brief overview of progress on the Seawall Project. Work continues along the waterfront, but businesses remain open and access to Colman Dock remains the same. They've installed light penetrating panels that are open to the public and shifted Alaskan Way slightly to the east. They plan to finish construction in April or May 2017.

Agenda Item #5 – Stakeholder group feedback

Tom Graff: Is there an update regarding the Western Avenue water line replacement?

Answer: SPU is working on the last block, from Madison to Spring street. There's a new pipe in the ground and they're just welding and decontaminating. The project is supposed to be complete by the end of March.

Susan Ranf: Another issue I think we're nervous about is the First Avenue streetcar and the other proposed water main replacement along First Avenue South. Have there been other discussions about that?

Answer: The water main work has been deferred. We will look into inviting the project manager for the streetcar to come talk to this group. Work is ongoing to coordinate construction activities and sequencing of the various projects.

- **Action Item: Invite project manager for First Avenue streetcar to next meeting.**

Vlad Oustimovich: It would be great if the timing of the SR 99 closure could happen before the start of the Mariners season. It should also be coordinated with ongoing construction work and soccer games.

Warren Aakervik: Would there be closures of the surface streets during the SR 99 closure?

Answer: No, that is not likely.

Warren Aakervik: Do we know how many drivers use the viaduct today?

Answer: Approximately 75,000 drivers.

Linda Anderson: When will the water main work be done?

Answer: The Western Avenue water main work will be complete in March. There are a number of other water line projects, including one near South King Street being planned by a private development.

Linda Anderson: When is streetcar construction supposed to start?

Answer: It depends on funding, but the last update was 2017.

Layne Cubell: I want to remind the group that the Seattle Center has a practice of sharing events with SDOT and WSDOT to help them with planning. It has worked really well and I want to remind people to continue to do that in this active construction window.

Agenda Item #6 – Action items and adjourn

Bernard wrapped up the meeting with a review of the action items (listed below).

Action items:

- Request from Susan Ranf: Invite project manager for First Avenue streetcar to next meeting.
 - *(WSDOT to coordinate with SDOT before next meeting.)*
- Request from Matt Curry: Present activities to be completed during testing and commissioning of the SR 99 tunnel.
 - *(WSDOT will provide an update at the next meeting.)*

- Request from Matt Curry: Present North Surface Street Connections design at future meeting.
 - *(WSDOT's design work for this project is currently on hold. WSDOT will provide an update later this year.)*
- Request from Pete Spalding: Follow up with Metro regarding water taxi shuttle options.
 - *(WSDOT to coordinate with King County Water Taxi and Metro and send update when more information is available.)*