

Alaskan Way Viaduct **REPLACEMENT** PROGRAM



June 2014

Building a new State Route 99 through Seattle

In summer 2013, the world's largest-diameter tunneling machine began a historic journey beneath downtown Seattle. Its purpose: dig a tunnel to replace the SR 99 Alaskan Way Viaduct, a double-deck highway that has spanned the downtown waterfront for more than 60 years.

The machine's task sounds straightforward enough, but the story behind it is complicated. It begins with an earthquake in 2001 that damaged the viaduct and led to a decade of debate about how to replace the structure. The story's conclusion is unfolding now, as we at the Washington State Department of Transportation, along with our agency partners, build a new SR 99 corridor through Seattle that includes:

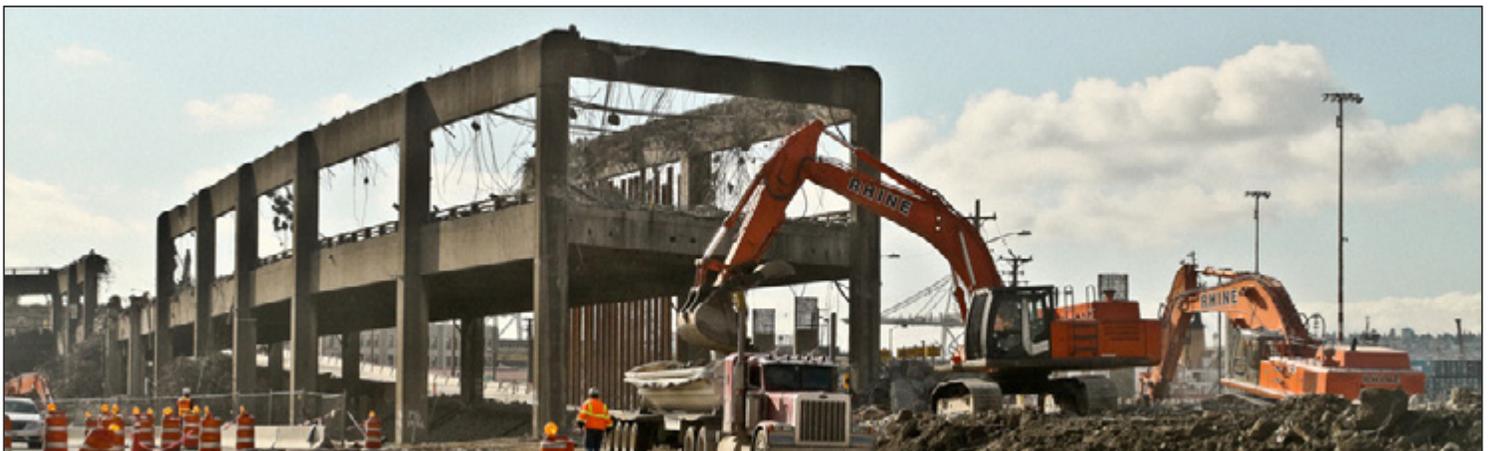
- A two-mile-long tunnel beneath downtown Seattle.
- A mile-long stretch of new highway that connects to the south entrance of the tunnel, near Seattle's stadiums.
- A new overpass at the south end of downtown that allows traffic to bypass train blockages near Seattle's busiest port terminal.

June 2014 update: Repairing the SR 99 tunneling machine

In December 2013, Seattle Tunnel Partners, the contracting team hired by WSDOT to design and build the SR 99 tunnel, stopped tunneling approximately 1,000 feet into the tunnel drive after measuring increased temperatures in the tunneling machine. While investigating the cause of the high temperatures, STP discovered damage to the machine's seal system and contamination within the main bearing. STP is working to repair the seal system and replace the main bearing so that crews can resume tunneling by the end of March 2015.

STP released an updated construction schedule in April 2014 that delays tunneling by up to 16 months. However, STP is working to recover as much as five months of schedule in order to open the tunnel in November 2016, WSDOT's original opening date as stated in the project's request for proposals. Per the SR 99 tunnel contract, STP agreed to open the tunnel in late 2015, 11 months earlier than WSDOT's requirement. The responsibility for additional costs and delays associated with this work will be addressed in accordance with the contract.

For the latest information about STP's work to resume tunneling, visit www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/Viaduct/About/FollowBertha.



Demolition of the Alaskan Way Viaduct's south end in fall 2011.

Connecting SR 99 to downtown

The tunnel will change the way traffic uses SR 99 in Seattle. Drivers approaching the tunnel from either direction will face a choice depending on their destination: use the tunnel to bypass downtown or exit to city streets and head into downtown.

At the tunnel's north end, downtown access will be similar to today, with on- and off-ramps near Seattle Center. From the south, new on- and off-ramps near the stadiums will connect SR 99 to a new waterfront surface street. This connection and new east-west connections between the new Alaskan Way and downtown will replace the function of today's midtown viaduct ramps and also provide improved access to the waterfront.



SR 99 tunnel south portal design concept.



SR 99 tunnel north portal design concept.



Looking south at the new SR 99 bridges, near Seattle's port and stadiums, and the construction bypass connection to the viaduct along the waterfront.

Related projects

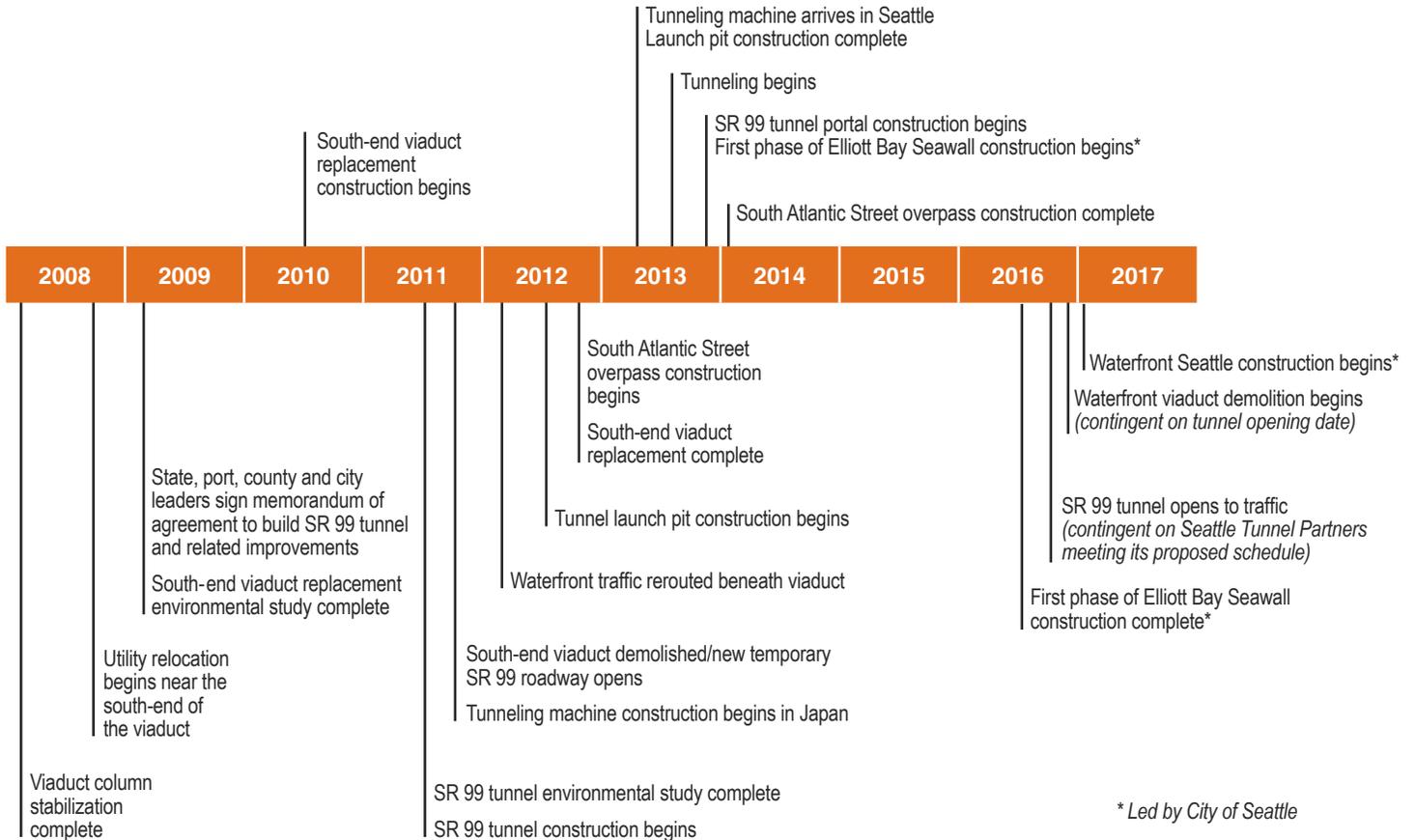
As part of the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program, King County, the City of Seattle and the Port of Seattle are planning street, transit, seawall and waterfront improvements. The city will build new public open space along the waterfront, replace the Elliott Bay seawall and improve other city streets such as the Spokane Street Viaduct and the Mercer corridor. The county is seeking funds to provide enhanced transit service to downtown in the SR 99 corridor. The city and county are responsible for managing these projects, including their environmental review.



Schedule

The Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program is led by WSDOT in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration, King County, the City of Seattle and the Port of Seattle. It includes more than 20 projects that will work together to reshape the SR 99 corridor.

Construction on the first project began in 2008, when crews stabilized four viaduct columns that settled following the 2001 Nisqually Earthquake. Since then, more than a dozen projects have been completed, with several more in progress or set to break ground soon. The below timeline includes major accomplishments along the road to viaduct replacement.



For more information

Visit the website at www.AlaskanWayViaduct.org
 Call the hotline at 1-888-AWV-LINE
 Send an email to viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov
 Follow @BerthaDigsSR99

Send a letter to:
 Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program
 Washington State Department of Transportation
 999 Third Ave., Suite 2200
 Seattle, WA 98104

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