

Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program
Stakeholder Group – Sept. 11, 2014
Meeting Summary

Stakeholder Group attendees

- Warren Aakervik, Ballard Oil
- Glenn Avery, Queen Anne Community Council
- Layne Cubell (for Robert Nellams), Seattle Center
- Stephen DeForest, Magnolia Community Club
- Tom Graff, Belltown Business Association
- Bree Moore, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Vince O'Halloran, Puget Sound Ports Council & Sailors Union of the Pacific
- Susan Ranf, Seattle Mariners
- Pete Spalding, Delridge
- Herald Ugles, International Longshore and Warehouse Union/Pacific Maritime Association

Stakeholder Group members not in attendance

- Jeff Aken, Cascade Bicycle Club
- Linda Anderson, Amalgamated Transit Union
- Michael Beranbaum, Joint Council of Teamsters No. 28
- Barb Chamberlain, Bicycle Alliance of Washington
- Howard Cohen, Seattle Hotel Association
- Jerome Cohen, West Seattle Chamber of Commerce
- John Coney, Uptown Alliance
- Alan Cornell, Nitze-Stagen
- Matt Curry, South Lake Union Chamber of Commerce
- Jan Drago, Alliance for Pioneer Square
- Phil Fujii, Vulcan
- Jason Handaly, Sound Produce
- Ron Hildebrandt, Trident Seafoods at Interbay
- Tim Hillis, Charlie's Produce
- John Huey, American West Bank and Duwamish Transportation Management Association
- Ron Kieswether, Oak Harbor Freight Lines
- Adam Link, CenturyLink Field and Event Center
- Lee Newgent, Seattle/KC Building & Construction Trades Council
- John Odland, MacMillan-Piper
- Marty Oppenheimer, South Park
- Vlad Oustimovitch, West Seattle
- Robbie Phillips, South Lake Union Community Council
- Tom Phillips, Compass Housing Alliance
- Lisa Quinn, Feet First
- Ed Shilley, Nucor Steel
- Eugene Wasserman, North Seattle Industrial Association
- Elaine Wine, Ballard

Agencies and staff in attendance

- Matt Preedy, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Jonathan Layzer, Seattle Department of Transportation
- Mike Merritt, Port of Seattle
- Jared Smith, Office of the Waterfront
- Dave Sowers, WSDOT
- Eric Tweit, SDOT

Agenda Item #1: Welcome and general updates

Matt Preedy welcomed everyone and introduced two new stakeholders that joined the group, Tom Phillips with Compass Housing Alliance and Phil Fujii with Vulcan.

Matt Preedy announced the upcoming meeting to discuss north surface streets scheduled for 4 p.m. Oct. 15 at UW Medicine in South Lake Union.

Dave Sowers gave an update on the parking mitigation program. He shared statistics on the success of the summer marketing campaign, continued development of partnerships with new garages and the increased garage utilization rates which have doubled since last year.

Susan Ranf: How do you expect parking utilization to change after Oct. 1 when some of the waterfront piers close during construction?

Answer: Many businesses will remain open and we will be providing parking for those businesses. We will continue to monitor and report on parking utilization statistics.

Waterfront Seattle status update

Jared Smith gave an update on Waterfront Seattle, which is at 30 percent design. Extensive outreach was done this summer at fairs and festivals. Outreach to businesses and property owners in Pioneer Square and the International District will begin in October and November.

Herald Ugles: Are the changes to Colman Dock included in the Environmental Impact Statement?

Answer: Yes.

Herald Ugles: Will the new Alaskan Way meet freight requirements?

Answer: Yes. New Alaskan Way is still being designed but it will accommodate long-load, over-height vehicles and will connect to Elliott and Western avenues.

Herald Ugles: Is a streetcar or trolley in the plans for the waterfront?

Answer: There will likely be a rubber-tire alternative that would use new Alaskan Way. The Seattle City Council recently approved a streetcar route on First Avenue.

Tom Graff: Who does the sky bridge on Elliott Avenue belong to and what will happen to it?

Answer: The sky bridge previously connected to Real Networks, but their office is no longer in that location. The sky bridge has a renewable permit which the city may choose not to renew.

Agenda Item #2: Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program

Matt Preedy gave a construction update on the tunnel's south portal. This included work on the access pit to repair the tunneling machine, the beginning of construction of the interior roadways and the completion of tunnel liner production at the Encon facility in Frederickson, Wash. Matt also gave a north portal update including Atkinson's work to build the future connections to the SR 99 tunnel and a recap of the work accomplished during the four-day SR 99 closure.

Warren Aakervik: Will crews be able to access the back of the machine if the roadways are being built inside the tunnel?

Answer: Yes. The lower road deck will be the last piece of concrete placed in the tunnel after tunneling is complete.

Pete Spalding: Crews are grinding the top layer of concrete near South Spokane Street on SR 99. What type of work is that?

Answer: Concrete panels on SR 99 between South Spokane Street and South Holgate Street have been replaced, but additional work needs to be completed to smooth out and seal the cracks of the concrete roadway. The panels are very thick and the concrete grinder will not affect the structural integrity of the panels. This work is being completed during nighttime lane closures.

Pete Spalding: Are you monitoring traffic counts on SR 99?

Answer: The City of Seattle discontinued its regular counts because we were unable to capture reliable data. We were measuring traffic that used the on- and off-ramps, but with ramp closures and changes due to construction, we could no longer get an accurate count. WSDOT provides data on SR 99 south of downtown which is a more reliable source.

Pete Spalding: In the past six months, my southbound evening commute from Northgate to West Seattle takes ten to fifteen minutes longer than before, regardless of special events. Is it because of the road configuration or an increase in traffic?

Answer: There are many factors that can affect traffic. There is a lot of construction going on in the city and different lane configurations can adversely affect traffic.

Warren Aakervik: There is gridlock on southbound I-5 at 2 p.m. Can you share traffic information for SR 99, I-5 or I-405?

Answer: WSDOT's Northwest Region has traffic counts of area highways that we can share with you.

Warren Aakervik: Who owns the modular lift tower being constructed at the access pit?

Answer: The modular lift tower is owned by Mammoet, a company that specializes in heavy lifts. Only a few companies are capable of doing this kind of work.

Vince O'Halloran: Who is working on the repairs to the machine itself?

Answer: It is a combination of Hitachi Zosen and Seattle Tunnel Partners.

Stephen DeForest: How much will the tunneling machine repairs cost and who will pay for repairs?

Answer: STP tendered a change order request to the state for \$125 million. Based on the contract, the state denied their request. STP has a variety of ways they can continue to pursue the change order, but it will take time to go through the contract terms. We understand that Hitachi Zosen is funding the repairs for the machine and STP is funding the work on the access pit. We all want the work to be completed correctly and safely. Any contractual issues will be worked out at a later date.

Warren Aakervik: Have crews installed the dewatering wells yet? Does the groundwater need to be lowered before crews can excavate?

Answer: The dewatering wells have not been installed yet. Crews will lower the groundwater before excavation begins.

Agenda Item #3 - Elliott Bay Seawall Project

Jonathan Layzer gave an update on the Elliott Bay Seawall Project. Work accomplished during season one included utility work, excavation, shoring wall installation and pile installation. The project's water treatment plant is currently located south of Colman Dock but it will soon move north of Pine Street under the viaduct. The second season's work will include shifting the ferry access U-turn from Spring Street to Madison Street. Movements through Alaskan Way will remain the same. Some businesses on the waterfront will remain open during season two work.

Tom Graff: Why are you treating the water?

Answer: The area around the waterfront can contain contaminants, such as residual diesel fuel, so we will treat any known contaminants in the water before discharging anything into Puget Sound.

Warren Aakervik: Will the area between Yesler Way and South King Street reopen after season one?

Answer: The area south of Yesler Way will continue to be occupied by WSDOT and STP until the machine has tunneled under the viaduct. SDOT and WSDOT will continue to keep both projects moving and finish up the work south of Yesler Way.

Layne Cubell: Seattle Center is preparing for next summer and will need to have information about seawall construction to keep our patrons informed about how to reach the waterfront. We will be working with the Downtown Seattle Association and hopefully SDOT so we can stay informed.

Answer: We are doing whatever we can to keep people coming to the waterfront. Thank you for the reminder.

Susan Ranf: How do people get from the Argosy dock to the ticket booth?

Answer: Argosy prefers to have a separate ticket office by the street where there is more foot traffic from customers entering and exiting the Seattle Aquarium.

Tom Graff: Will the retail stores at Colman Dock remain open?

Answer: Yes, some of the retail stores will remain open. Subway has moved into the space formerly occupied by McDonald's. The espresso stand will be temporarily removed.

Layne Cubell: How long is season two of the project?

Answer: Season two lasts from October 2014 to June 2015.

Agenda Item #4 - Mercer Corridor Program

Eric Tweit gave an update on the Mercer Corridor Program and major work that has been completed including the bypass at the intersection of Dexter Avenue North and Mercer Street and Broad Street bridge demolition. Near the end of October, an additional eastbound lane on Mercer Street will open between Fifth Avenue North and Ninth Avenue North. There will also be new pedestrian routes.

Warren Aakervik: Will the new pedestrian routes have signals?

Answer: Yes.

Vince O'Halloran: Dexter Avenue's capacity for automobiles has been greatly reduced over the past several years. Is there any plan for changing that?

Answer: There are no plans to increase the capacity on Dexter Avenue North.

Warren Aakerik: There is a sign on southbound SR 99 that says trucks carrying toxic materials can turn at the next exit. However, the next possible exit is Denny Way. Denny Way is not a good option because of grades. In addition, trucks over 30 feet in length are not allowed on downtown streets south of Denny Way during the day.

Answer: We will look into this.

Warren Aakervik: There are some problem areas for trucks traveling through the Mercer construction zone.

Answer: We can talk more about specifics after the meeting.

Tom Graff: The intersection of Dexter Avenue North and Mercer Street is very dangerous. There are a lot more bicyclists on the road and northbound drivers have to weave through the bike lane in order to get into the right turn lane. Is this the final configuration?

Answer: The intersection of Dexter and Mercer is in a temporary configuration during construction. However, the configuration of the bicycle lane and northbound right turns will be similar to what is in place now. The design is intentional because it makes drivers aware of crossing the bike lane into the right turn lane. Drivers making right turns from southbound Dexter to Mercer had several close calls with bicycles so we restricted those right turns while the intersection is under construction.

Agenda Item #5 - Stakeholder group feedback

Layne Cubell: Seattle Center continues to work closely with SDOT on the Mercer Corridor Program to keep our patrons and organizations informed about upcoming changes that may impact future events. There is an unprecedented amount of construction and transportation activities in the area. We have seen attendance numbers decrease but monorail ridership is increasing.

Stephen DeForest: How many more years of construction are remaining for these projects?

Answer: STP's goal is to open the tunnel by the end of 2016. After the completion of the tunnel, the viaduct will be demolished and the Battery Street Tunnel decommissioned. The new Alaskan Way will be built in the footprint of the viaduct which will take several years. The complete SR 99 corridor will be finished at the end of 2018 at the earliest.

Much of the Elliott Bay Seawall Project will be completed by mid-2016, with some additional in-water, low-impact work that will be completed in early 2017. Two foundation projects can only be completed after the SR 99 tunnel project is complete. The scheduled year of completion is 2020.

Substantial completion of the Mercer Corridor Project will be in the fall of 2015.

Herald Ugles: Is the parking website an app?

Answer: No, but the website is optimized for mobile use.

Warren Aakervik: I continue to voice my concerns about the loss of freight routes and mobility in the city. As the chairman of the Seattle Freight Advisory Board, I hope that the freight and trucking community will be able to move around the city. As more of the major truck routes are eliminated, I-5, which is constantly gridlocked, will be the only route available for trucks.

Vince O'Halloran: I agree with Warren's comment. Seattle's maritime industry is a very important part of this city.

Agenda Item #6: Action items and adjourn

- ✓ How will parking utilization be impacted when many of the waterfront piers close on Oct. 1? (*WSDOT and SDOT will maintain the parking mitigation program and will continue to provide updated parking statistics on the [Parking Stakeholder Group Web page](#). WSDOT has also scheduled separate follow-up meetings with the Seattle Mariners to discuss this in more detail.*)
- ✓ Is it possible to get traffic data about state highways in Seattle? (*WSDOT collects average traffic volumes for state highways. This data can be found in the annual [Ramp and Roadway Report](#). Additionally, WSDOT published an [Annual Traffic Report](#) that covers average volumes at specific points on all state highways.*)