

Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program
Program Oversight Committee – June 3, 2010
Meeting Summary

Program Oversight Committee Members in Attendance:

- Governor Chris Gregoire, State of Washington
- State Representative Judy Clibborn
- State Senator Mary Margaret Haugen
- Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn
- Seattle City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen
- King County Executive Dow Constantine
- Port of Seattle Commissioner Bill Bryant
- Port of Seattle CEO Tay Yoshitani

Members not in attendance:

- King County Councilmember Larry Phillips

Agency staff in attendance:

- Paula Hammond, Washington Transportation Secretary
- Ron Paananen, WSDOT Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program Administrator
- Linea Laird, WSDOT Director of Central and North Projects
- Matt Preedy, WSDOT Director of South End Projects
- Peter Hahn, SDOT Director
- Bob Powers, SDOT Deputy Director
- Ron Posthuma, King County DOT Assistant Director
- Kurt Beckett, Port of Seattle Chief of Staff
- Mike Merritt, Port of Seattle Manager of Local Government Relations

Agenda Item #1 – Welcome and Introductions

Governor Gregoire welcomed committee members and the public to the meeting. After member introductions she informed the group that meetings will take place quarterly. Committee meetings will provide an opportunity for transparency and accountability and will be a forum to discuss any issues as the program moves forward.

Governor Gregoire provided a history of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and thanked the State Legislature for allocating funding for the viaduct replacement. She also thanked the agency partners for their unprecedented commitment and collaboration between the State, City of Seattle, King County and the Port of Seattle.

Agenda Item #2 – Overview of Program

Partner agencies provided an overview of the management and organization of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program and the projects included within it.

State Projects

WSDOT Program Administrator Ron Paananen explained the management structure for the program, which includes oversight from the Secretary of Transportation's office and elected and appointed bodies such as the Program Oversight Committee. In addition, WSDOT has an independent team of experts, the Strategic Technical Advisory Team, that provides guidance on understanding and effectively managing risk. Additionally, the program team receives extensive public input and feedback.

The cost estimate for the viaduct replacement is \$3.1 billion. The State has committed \$2.4 billion from state and federal sources. The Legislature has stated the finance plan must include no more than \$400 million in toll funding. The Port of Seattle has also committed \$300 million to the replacement program.

Paananen described milestones and progress for the State projects:

- **S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project (south end):** WSDOT awarded the Stage 2 bid to Skanska USA Civil. Construction will begin in late June or July, and viaduct removal between S. Holgate and S. King streets is scheduled for 2012.
- **S. King Street to S. Roy Street viaduct replacement (central):** WSDOT released a request for proposals on May 26 for the bored tunnel design-build project. Agreements between the State and City agencies, including Seattle Public Utilities, Seattle City Light and SDOT, will be transmitted to the Mayor and City Council for approval. The goal is to open the tunnel by the end of 2015, but the potential design-build contractors have the flexibility of proposing a schedule with an opening date no later than November 2016. Proposals are due this fall. The team is continuing work on the Second Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement which will be released for public review in October.

Throughout the presentation committee members discussed the potential for cost overruns on the bored tunnel project, the amount set aside for risk and inflation in the bored tunnel cost estimate, the benefit of moving forward to take advantage of the favorable bidding climate, and the proposed timeline for tunnel completion and viaduct removal. Committee members also discussed the 2009 State Legislature's bill endorsing the bored tunnel and a provision that intends to hold Seattle area property owners responsible for cost overruns.

City Projects

SDOT Deputy Director Bob Powers explained that the City's contribution to the program is \$841 million, which is different than the 2009 estimate of \$927 million. The difference is due to an updated seawall estimate and the decision to evaluate the First Avenue Streetcar as part of the City's Transit Master Plan. The total budget for program-related City projects is \$1.1 billion.

Powers described milestones and progress for the City projects:

- **Elliott Bay Seawall replacement:** A team has been hired to work on alternatives development, and the City is working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on the environmental process. The schedule has been accelerated, and the team is focused on trying to complete construction by the end of 2014. The project budget is \$274 million.
- **Mercer Corridor Project (Mercer East):** This project is fully funded. Construction bids came in more than 20 percent below SDOT's estimate. Construction will begin this summer.

- **Mercer Corridor Project (Mercer West and Parking Program):** The design team has started work and is evaluating a new intersection at Sixth Avenue N. and Mercer Street.
- **S. Spokane Street Viaduct Widening Project:** Both the widening and off-ramp projects are on schedule and budget. The project should be complete in spring 2012 and will help with mobility during viaduct replacement construction.
- **Central Waterfront Public Spaces:** The Central Waterfront Partnerships Committee is providing recommendations to the Mayor and City Council this summer. They are looking at how to solicit consultants, the overall governance model for the central waterfront, and stewardship or ownership and maintenance of the public spaces.

There was discussion about funding for the seawall project and the timeline for working with the Mayor's Office and City Council on a funding plan. Additionally, there was discussion about alternative types of seawall replacement, the potential for using a Local Improvement District as a funding source, and the coordination between the seawall and central waterfront project teams. Committee members had questions about funding for each of the City projects and about the federal TIGER grant for the Mercer East project.

County Projects

KCDOT Assistant Director Ron Posthuma explained the State is funding enhanced transit service during the south end viaduct replacement. The County's proposals for transit services to accompany the bored tunnel are largely unfunded.

Posthuma described milestones and progress for the County projects:

- **Construction Transit Service and Demand Management (south end viaduct replacement):** Additional service on routes from Southwest Seattle has started, attracting several hundred additional riders per day. The bus travel time monitoring system has also been installed. The County is marketing potential travel options as part of transportation demand management programs.
- **Transit investments (bored tunnel recommendation):** Funding has been secured for the Burien Park and Ride, and construction should begin later this year. The partner agencies have reached agreement on SR 99 transit priority in the north portal area. There is ongoing discussion about transit priority in Pioneer Square and the south portal area.

There was discussion about RapidRide bus rapid transit lines and the reliability of service from West Seattle, in addition to how and when King County can make service changes. Questions were also asked about potential funding sources and the level of funding needed to implement transit services included in the bored tunnel recommendation.

Port Projects

Manager of Local Government Relations Mike Merritt informed the Committee that the Port has agreed to provide \$300 million to the program. Approximately \$25 million will go toward projects already underway, including the East Marginal Way Grade Separation Project, SR 519 Intermodal Access Project and S. Spokane Street Viaduct Widening Project. The Port has also made other investments in regional transportation projects to ensure mobility for freight and to reduce congestion.

Merritt described milestones and progress for the Port's East Marginal Way Grade Separation Project. This project will elevate traffic over the railroad tracks and should be complete in fall 2011.

There was discussion about the Port's tax base, bonding capacity and how the Port plans to finance the \$300 million contribution to the program. Port officials noted that they have begun building a transportation reserve for future obligations to the program.

Agenda Item #3 – Adjourn Public Session

Committee members discussed the timely review and approval of State-City agreements related to the proposed bored tunnel and the need to proactively manage risks for the project.

Members requested a briefing at the next quarterly meeting about construction coordination and how agencies are working to keep drivers moving during these projects.

Senator Haugen also requested a briefing at the Joint Transportation Committee about the phasing of the capital delivery program.

All meeting materials are available on the program website:
www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/Viaduct/POCmaterials.htm.