U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Washington State
Department of Transportation

City of Seattle

June 2005 Public Meetings - What We Heard

The Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project hosted three public meetings on June 21, June 22, and June 23, 2005. The purpose of the open houses was to begin a conversation with the public about how the tunnel or rebuild may be built and how to keep people and goods moving during construction. During the meetings, the public had an opportunity to view project information, and to speak with the project team about construction options and other details of the proposed plans. Project team members were stationed next to information displays depending on their expertise. Stations covered topics such as project schedule and funding, sequence of construction activities, traffic disruptions during construction, and strategies for keeping people and goods moving during construction.

There was a brief formal presentation at each meeting given by team members who outlined details and possible construction phases. They also walked through an animated simulation of the proposed tunnel. Several handouts and fact sheets were available, which explained the need to replace the Viaduct and invest in the tunnel, options for construction duration, and the central waterfront area plan. This information is also available online at **http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/viaduct/.**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers presented display boards and handout materials on their proposed feasibility study of replacing the seawall, which is expected to determine future funding from the Corps. Information from other projects was also available, including the Mercer Corridor Project, Downtown Construction Coordination Program, and the Seattle Ferry Terminal Project. Comment forms were provided and collected in comment boxes placed at the meeting. Additional meeting materials included display boards, sign-in sheets, directional signs, Title VI forms, snacks and refreshments.

The three meetings were held throughout the project corridor, in neighborhoods that will be directly affected by the upcoming construction and improvements. The northern corridor meeting was held at the National Guard Armory in Interbay; the central corridor meeting at Benaroya Hall in downtown Seattle; the southern corridor meeting at West Seattle High School in West Seattle. There were over 200 attendees in downtown Seattle, and over 100 each at Interbay and West Seattle. Each meeting lasted about three hours.

Comments received at all three meetings are detailed below in the overall comment summary. A detailed description of comments from each meeting also appears below.

Summary of Comments

The following is a summary of comments received at all three public meetings. A total of 143 comment forms were received. There is statistical data for some categories, as well as a summary of the answers given for other questions. This summary also represents verbal comments given to project staff that may not have been captured in submitted comment forms. This section also describes the methods that were used to quantify comments.

1. **How often do you use the Viaduct?**

41%---Daily
37%---Weekly
12%---Seldom
10%---Monthly

These percentages are for responses received at all three meetings. The numbers for each individual meeting vary from these percentages. However, the majority of the 'seldom' and 'monthly' responses came from the downtown meeting, while slightly more West Seattle and Interbay residents indicated that they use the Viaduct daily or weekly.

2. **Do you use the Viaduct to:**

49%---Both
35%---Bypass downtown
16%---Go to downtown

The results from the Interbay meeting vary from these trends. Attendees at the Interbay meeting most often responded that they use the Viaduct to bypass downtown.

3. **When you use the Viaduct, do you most often:**

47%---Drive your car by yourself
31%---Drive your car with a passenger(s)
14%---Take the bus
6%---Ride as a passenger in a car
2%---Drive a freight truck or delivery vehicle

Results at each meeting generally reflect these percentages. More people at the downtown and West Seattle meetings indicated that they take the bus, and the Interbay meeting hosted the majority of respondents who delivered freight.

4. **Do you (you may select multiple options):**

28%---Live north of downtown
28%---Live south of downtown
22%---Live downtown
10%---Own a business north of downtown
10%---Own a business downtown
2%---Own a business south of downtown

Note: These numbers are independent of each other, meaning that people were given the option of checking more than one box. Each percentage is calculated as the number of times each box was checked over the total number of comment forms.

The above percentages are from all three public meetings. The trends shown in the above percentages differ from the percentages from each individual meeting. As expected, most people who indicated that they either lived or owned a business downtown attended the downtown meeting. Most respondents who owned a business or lived north of downtown attended the meeting in Interbay, although some attended the downtown meeting as well. Similarly, most respondents who owned a business or lived south of downtown attended the West Seattle meeting.

5. **For your most frequent trips on the Viaduct, where are you coming from and going to?**

Origin

28%---West Seattle
17%---Downtown
13%---Other
8%---Ballard
7%---Queen Anne
6%---Fremont
4%---Greenwood
4%---Magnolia
3%---SODO
3%---Sea Tac
2%---Interbay
1%--Duwamish
1%---Federal Way
1%---Shoreline
1%---South Lake Union
1%---Uptown

Destination

16%---Downtown
13%---Other
11%---Sea Tac
10%---Ballard
10%---West Seattle
8%---SODO
7%---Fremont
7%---Queen Anne
6%---Greenwood
3%---Interbay
3%---Magnolia
2%---South Lake Union
1%---Duwamish
1%---Federal Way
1%---Shoreline
1%---Uptown

These numbers were calculated from the entire group of comment forms. Individuals were given the option of choosing multiple alternatives. Trends for 'destination' were similar among all three groups. However, the meeting location tended to predict the respondent's choice for 'origin.' For example, many respondents at the Interbay meeting chose neighborhoods in the northern corridor such as Ballard, Queen Anne, or Magnolia.

6. **What are your priorities? Tell us which of the following is the most important (rank most important to least important, with 1 being the most important, and 3 being the least).**

Most important:

44%---Getting construction done as quickly as possible
31%---Reducing the cost of construction
25%---Reducing closures of SR 99

Least important:

48%---Reducing closures of SR 99
29%---Reducing the cost of construction
23%---Getting construction done as quickly as possible

In all three meetings, the most common response was that it was most important to get construction done as quickly as possible. However, during the presentations and in interactions with the project team, many people expressed that they did not support the tunnel. This was the case particularly at the meeting in Interbay. A majority of those who opposed the tunnel indicated that they would prefer the rebuild option, although some favored alternate plans such as eliminating SR 99 completely from the waterfront area. For these reasons, many people objected to a question concerning priorities because they felt that it was based on the assumption that they supported the tunnel construction.

For those that answered this question, many felt that a briefer but more intense construction schedule would be preferable. Some reasoned that since even a partial closure of SR 99 would be substantially disruptive to traffic patterns, the best option would be to get it over with as quickly as possible. Others became less enthusiastic about the option of getting construction done quickly when told that meant the Viaduct would be completely closed for a significant length of time.

Many others saw cost as the most important factor, and several people stated that they supported the rebuild option for that reason. Respondents that saw the closure of SR 99 as the most important factor tended to depend on the Viaduct to deliver freight or use the Viaduct to bypass downtown for their daily commute.

7. **Do you agree with the transportation management goals identified by the project? Are some more important than others to you?**

While most respondents were supportive of getting construction done as quickly as possible, they are concerned about being able to move around during construction. The most frequent goals mentioned were to keep transit and freight moving and ensuring that west side communities are not completely cut off from downtown.

8. **Considering your priorities and the list of potential transportation management ideas, what other ideas should be considered as ways to keep the most people and goods moving during construction?**

The specific ideas mentioned tended to reflect the location of the meeting and where residents were coming from. Overall, most respondents felt that giving priority to transit, whether it is more ferries from West Seattle to downtown or more bus service to and from Seattle neighborhoods, was the most important way to keep people moving during construction.

9. **If you do not ride the bus to work today, what incentives would make it possible for you to ride the bus during construction?**

Most respondents did not answer this question, while those that did indicated that their job required them to have a car. A few respondents suggested that increased subsidies for employers or larger free-ride zones might be effective incentives.

10. **If you deliver freight or goods to downtown today, what changes would be necessary to make deliveries during off-peak hours rather than peak hours?**

Just a few respondents answered this question, as there were not many who indicated that they delivered freight. A majority of those who responded felt that their schedules were inflexible, although a few thought they might be able to switch to delivering on off-peak hours.

11. **Do you think the recommended surface street location is correct? Why?**

Most people agreed with the recommendation to keep surface Alaskan Way on the east or city side of the existing right-of-way. Attendees were interested in preserving areas of the right of way as a buffer from traffic, for open space to tie the city and waterfront together, and as a more pedestrian-friendly area. Some attendees were interested in seeing the width of surface Alaskan Way further reduced to only two lanes and a higher priority given to non-auto transportation choices.

12. **Do you have any comments about the lowered Aurora Avenue improvements?**

Respondents were mixed in their feelings about the proposed Lowered Aurora improvements. Some felt very strongly that the improvements are necessary, both to improve vehicle safety and pedestrian and bicycle connections across SR 99. Others questioned whether it is really necessary in a time of limited funding and great needs for transportation improvements, and whether it should be a part of the Viaduct and seawall replacement.

13. **Any other comments?**

Individuals were given the opportunity to submit additional comments at the end of each form. Comments from each meeting are listed below.

June 21, 2005—Benaroya Hall, 4:00—7:00 pm

1. **How often do you use the Viaduct?**

35%---Weekly
25%---Daily
25%---Seldom
15%---Monthly

2. **Do you use the Viaduct to:**

55%---Both
29%---Bypass downtown
16%---Go to downtown

3. **When you use the Viaduct, do you most often:**

44%---Drive your car by yourself
37%---Drive your car with a passenger
12%---Take the bus
7%---Ride as a passenger in a car
0%---Drive a freight truck or delivery vehicle

4. **Do you (you may select multiple options):**

31%---Live downtown
19%---Live north of downtown
16%--Own a business downtown
12%--Live south of downtown
4%---Own a business north of downtown
1%--Own a business south of downtown
16%---Other

Those who responded 'other' most often wrote that they worked downtown. As expected, almost half of the responses indicated that attendees either live downtown or own a business downtown. One-fifth of respondents live north of downtown.

5. **For your most frequent trips on the Viaduct, where are you coming from and going to?**

Origin

39%---Downtown
19%---Other
9%---West Seattle
5%---Ballard
5%---Queen Anne
5%---SODO
4%---Fremont
4%---Sea Tac
4%---Shoreline
2%---Federal Way
2%---Greenwood
2%---Uptown
None---Duwamish, Interbay, Magnolia, South Lake Union

Destination

18%---Downtown
18%---Sea Tac
16%---West Seattle
13%---Ballard
11%---Other
9%---SODO
4%---Fremont
4%---Greenwood
3%---Interbay
1%---Duwamish
1%---Federal Way
1%---Magnolia
1%---Queen Anne
1%---Uptown
None---Shoreline, South Lake Union

6. **What are your priorities? Tell us which of the following is the most important (rank most important to least important, with 1 being the most important, and 3 being the least).**

Most important:

52%---Getting construction done as quickly as possible.
30%---Reducing the cost of construction
18%---Reducing closures of SR 99

Least important:

48%---Reducing closures of SR 99
38%---Reducing the cost of construction
14%---Getting construction done as quickly as possible

People at the downtown meeting generally were enthusiastic about getting construction moving as soon as possible. Many people at this meeting live downtown, walk to work, or own a business downtown, and are concerned about pedestrian access and noise levels during construction.

7. **Do you agree** with the transportation management goals identified by the project? **Are some more important than others to you?**

Many of the transportation goals received positive feedback, although waterfront businesses are particularly concerned about the impact of construction. They would prefer the plan to avoid reducing street parking during construction, as it will deter customers and employees from getting to businesses downtown.

Many respondents were supportive of the overall goal to 'tie the waterfront with the city,' and are looking forward to an open area that is more aesthetically pleasing and pedestrian friendly.

8. **Considering your priorities** and the list of potential transportation management ideas, **what other ideas should be considered as ways to keep the most people and goods moving during construction?**

- Move the trolley to Western Avenue to benefit downtown residents.
- Web site and information system to keep users aware of construction stages, and how to find alternative or temporary access routes for walkers, bikes, cars, and buses.
- To facilitate moving people from pier to pier during construction, have a water taxi during the summer peak season.

9. **If you do not ride the bus to work today, what incentives would make it possible for you to ride the bus during construction?**

- Extend the free-ride zone.
- More frequent bus service.
- Improved electronic signage that indicates when the next bus is due.

10. **If you deliver freight or goods to downtown today, what changes would be necessary to make deliveries during off-peak hours rather than peak hours?**

Only a few respondents answered this question, and explained that no one is usually present at buildings to receive goods during off-peak hours.

11. **Do you think the recommended surface street location is correct?** Why?

There was generally positive sentiment about the surface street location because it makes the waterfront the primary center of activity. There were also many comments in support of bike lanes and wide sidewalks for pedestrians.

12. **Do you have any comments about the lowered Aurora Avenue improvements?**

Most respondents were enthusiastic about the recommendation, seeing it as an opportunity to complete the grid at South Lake Union and make the neighborhood work for pedestrians. They also liked the idea of getting rid of the circuitous route to the Seattle Center from I-5, but would like to see more detailed graphics showing 3-D views and profiles of the segment. However, several commented that the improvements seem like an expensive add-on and should be eliminated from the project in light of rising costs.

13. **Any other comments?**

These comments were chosen as a representation of the type of additional comments that were received. Not every comment is listed here.

> "I think we have an opportunity to do things right and I hope we don't take the cheap way out. This is a vision that is a once in a lifetime opportunity."

> "When possible, lessen emphasis on automobile -making it harder for cars to move around would encourage folks to use buses, bikes for personal transportation to home/workplace - place bike lanes between parking and sidewalks."

> "Make sure you can get the other half of funding before you start the construction. Do not come back to taxpayers asking for more money when you're left halfway of construction."

> "Build it as quickly as possible to keep the costs down. Hold fast to the tunnel option! Calculate the costs of degraded aesthetics, noise, stress on people due to noise, visual impacts etc. for the next 100 years and add those to the rebuild option to demonstrate the real costs. The tunnel option is the only option that makes sense! Seawall rebuild cost should also be added to the Viaduct rebuild option."

June 22, 2005—National Guard Armory, 5:00—7:30 pm

1. **How often do you use the Viaduct?**

   51%---Daily
   37%---Weekly
   9%---Monthly
   3%---Seldom

2. **Do you use the Viaduct to:**

   54%---Bypass downtown
   43%---Both
   3%---Go to downtown

3. **When you use the Viaduct, do you most often:**

   62%---Drive your car by yourself
   26%---Drive your car with a passenger
   7%---Drive a freight truck or delivery vehicle
   5%---Ride as a passenger in a car
   0%---Take the bus

4. **Do you (you may select multiple options):**

   44%---Live north of downtown
   19%--Own a business north of downtown
   13%---Live downtown
   4%--Live south of downtown
   1%---Own a business downtown
   1%--Own a business south of downtown
   16%---Other

Responses for 'Other' included work downtown, work in West Seattle, or work in SODO.

5. **For your most frequent trips on the Viaduct, where are you coming from and going to?**

Origin

17%---Ballard
14%---Magnolia
12%---Queen Anne
10%---Federal Way
7%---Downtown
7%---Fremont
5%---Greenwood
3%---Duwamish
2%---Interbay
2%---Magnolia
2%---South Lake Union
1%---Duwamish
1%---Shoreline
1%---Uptown
None---Federal Way
13%---Other

Destination

18%---Sea Tac
16%---SODO
13%---Downtown
7%---Ballard
7%---Fremont
6%---West Seattle
5%---Queen Anne
4%---Greenwood
3%---Interbay
3%---Sea Tac
2%---SODO
2%---Uptown
2%---West Seattle
None---Shoreline, South Lake Union
13%---Other

6. **What are your priorities? Tell us which of the following is the most important (rank most important to least important, with 1 being the most important, and 3 being the least).**

Most important:

34%---Getting construction done as quickly as possible
34%---Reducing the cost of construction
32%---Reducing closures of SR 99

Least important:

50%---Reducing closures of SR 99
44%---Getting construction done as quickly as possible
6%---Reducing the cost of construction

Unlike the other two meetings, respondents were equally divided on what should be prioritized during construction. Since many people attending the Interbay meeting use the Viaduct to bypass downtown and lack alternate routes, reducing closures of SR 99 seemed to be a higher priority for this group.

People also felt that this question made the incorrect assumption that they supported construction of the tunnel to begin with. Many people attending this meeting were against building the tunnel or disrupting normal traffic on the Viaduct with construction, particularly if they deliver freight or use the Viaduct daily to bypass downtown. Some people felt that they would be forced to bear the burden of construction, while not receiving any of the benefit since they do not live downtown. This was expressed more often during the presentation and in interactions with the project team than on the actual comment forms.

7. **Do you agree with the transportation management goals identified by the project? Are some more important than others to you?**

People were divided on whether they agreed with the transportation management goals, often depending on their support for the tunnel. As one person put it, “I want the low cost, low disruption option of retrofitting the existing structure.”

Several people commented that it was difficult to assess their priorities when they were unsure of how badly the construction would hurt their businesses or impact traffic. They would like to see an economic analysis of the impact on commuters, freight, and other road users of the delays and disruptions associated with the various construction options. While some were positive about the improved waterfront area, overall there was concern that the needs of commuters and the freight community were being overlooked.

8. **Considering your priorities and the list of potential transportation management ideas, what other ideas should be considered as ways to keep the most people and goods moving during construction?**

- Limit commercial deliveries to off-peak hours or designate some corridors as 'freight-only.'
- Encourage employers to allow 'flex time' around construction.
- Have the Port consider nighttime operations.
- Build a North Link light rail.
- Make a detour route along Denny, Mercer and 7th Avenue.
- Prioritize carpools and transit.

9. **If you do not ride the bus to work today, what incentives would make it possible for you to ride the bus during construction?**

- Make bus fares less expensive or offer tax deductions.
- Add more frequent buses and routes for express buses.
- Alter bus routes so that less transfers are required.

Several people also commented that they were unable to take the bus to work because of the nature of their job or work schedule.

10. **If you deliver freight or goods to downtown today, what changes would be necessary to make deliveries during off-peak hours rather than peak hours?**

Most respondents who indicated that they deliver freight were skeptical that they would be able to continue deliveries with closures on the Viaduct. Many expressed concern that they would have to relocate or change businesses. Several offered suggestions to offset congestion during construction.

- Truck-only street lanes during peak hours.
- Require heavy loads to make deliveries during off-peak hours.

11. **Do you think the recommended surface street location is correct? Why?**

Responses were varied, approximately half in favor and half against the recommended location. Some people commented that the area devoted to open space was lacking. For example, one person said, "It may be OK, but seems like a lot of parking and functionality is lost without much reduction of pavement nor great gain in greenery." Others agreed with the surface street location and felt it would help revive and better utilize the downtown waterfront area.

12. **Do you have any comments about the lowered Aurora Avenue improvements?**

Again, people were divided in their support of lowered Aurora improvements. Many people did not see the connection between the proposed improvements and the overall plan for the Viaduct, and felt that it was an expense designed primarily to benefit developers in the South Lake Union area. Others see the improvements as a critically important step that should be finished first to help access I-5 during tunnel construction.

13. **Any other comments?**

These comments were chosen as a representation of the type of additional comments that were received. Not every comment is listed here.

"I know you do not intend this, but many citizens are feeling like we are being railroaded. You work on this 40 hours a week and know the pros and cons inside out, but we do not and a lot of this info is new to us (and I read the newspaper daily). We feel that we do not have much say into what is going on in our city. Think about the stadiums that we voted against."

"This is great. Let's get it done. One walk on the waterfront in Chicago would convince any doubter. Seize the opportunity!"
"Please be mindful that some people live in the area affected. Nighttime noise is a concern. I'm willing to bear some short-term pain for long-term gain."

"Please clarify what the $4.4 million pays for, i.e. which plan!! Best choice is to shut it down and get it done. Any idea to "partially" impact the city for a "longer" time is misguided. The construction will be a mess - just go full speed and get it over with."

"Rebuild. If an Earthquake has the Viaduct still standing, for heavens sake, what would happen in a dang tunnel!"

June 23, 2005—West Seattle High School, 5:00—7:30 p.m.

1. **How often do you use the Viaduct?**

50%---Daily
38%---Weekly
8%---Monthly
4%---Seldom

2. **Do you use the Viaduct to:**

49%---Both
28%---Go to downtown
23%---Bypass downtown

3. **When you use the Viaduct, do you most often:**

40%---Drive your car by yourself
28%---Take the bus
27%---Drive your car with a passenger
5%---Ride as a passenger in a car
None---Drive a freight truck or delivery vehicle

4. **Do you (you may select multiple options):**

67%---Live south of downtown
8%--Own a business north of downtown
8%---Live north of downtown
2%--Own a business south of downtown
None---Own a business downtown, live downtown
15%---Other

People most often listed West Seattle for 'Other,' instead of indicating that they lived south of downtown.

5. **For your most frequent trips on the Viaduct, where are you coming from and going to?**

Origin

76%---West Seattle
4%---Ballard
4%---Fremont
4%---Greenwood
2%---Downtown
2%---Queen Anne
2%---SODO
2%---South Lake Union
None---Duwamish, Federal Way, Interbay, Magnolia, Sea Tac, Shoreline, Uptown
4%---Other

Destination

25%---Downtown
13%---Queen Anne
12%---Ballard
10%---Greenwood
8%---Fremont
7%---West Seattle
4%---Magnolia
3%---South Lake Union
2%---Interbay
2%---Shoreline
2%---SODO
2%---Uptown
None---Federal Way, Sea Tac
9%---Other

6. **What are your priorities? Tell us which of the following is the most important (rank most important to least important, with 1 being the most important, and 3 being the least).**

Most important:

41%---Getting construction done as quickly as possible
32%---Reducing the cost of construction
27%---Reducing closures of SR 99

Least important:

48%---Reducing closures of SR 99
33%---Getting construction done as quickly as possible
19%---Reducing the cost of construction

Although the most common response indicated that getting construction done quickly was the most important concern, many people expressed dismay at all of the construction options presented under the proposed tunnel. There was concern that a complete shutdown of the Viaduct would cripple West Seattle. While some felt that the effects of the closures could be offset with increased transit options, others would rather see the Viaduct rebuilt if it meant less disruption.

7. **Do you agree with the transportation management goals identified by the project? Are some more important than others to you?**

A majority of people agreed with the transportation management goals identified during the open house. Many commented again that increased transit options would be critical during construction, particularly considering West Seattle's dependence on the Viaduct for access to downtown and surrounding areas. People's opinions varied based on their view of the tradeoff between intense construction disruptions and the long-term gain of integrating the waterfront with the downtown area.

8. **Considering your priorities and the list of potential transportation management ideas, what other ideas should be considered as ways to keep the most people and goods moving during construction?**

- Expand water taxi service, possibly making it year-round
- Alternate ferry service to downtown
- Increased bus service from West Seattle (#37)
- Transit lanes for buses
- Improve the Spokane Street Viaduct for better access to I-5
- Make sure the monorail is in place to alleviate congestion

9. **If you do not ride the bus to work today, what incentives would make it possible for you to ride the bus during construction?**

- Subsidize bus passes for West Seattle residents
- Increase service at night for games and leisure activities
- Add an express route to every route

10. **If you deliver freight or goods to downtown today, what changes would be necessary to make deliveries during off-peak hours rather than peak hours?**

Only a few people answered this question since no one indicated on the comment form that they deliver freight. Those who responded suggested altering their own schedules to avoid congestion.

11. **Do you think the recommended surface street location is correct? Why?**

Most people agreed with the surface street location and were enthusiastic about having pedestrian access directly on the waterfront. Some people expressed concern over rising costs and questioned whether the money spent on the Steinbrueck Park lid should be saved for inevitable budget increases down the road.

12. **Do you have any comments about the lowered Aurora Avenue improvements?**

People were divided in their support of the lowered Aurora Avenue improvements. Some felt that it was an unnecessary expense, and that the priority should go to fixing the Viaduct, especially since it is being presented as such an urgent safety concern. Others saw the benefit in connecting the streets and making access to Aurora easier to maneuver. A few commented that the money would be better spent fixing Spokane Street Viaduct, which is a concern for many West Seattle residents.

13. **Any other comments?**

These comments were chosen as a representation of the type of additional comments that were received. Not every comment is listed here.

> "What happens if the monorail isn't built, or not built on schedule?"

> "Please put safety way ahead of aesthetics and give good consideration to local businesses and ferry traffic."

> "Closing SR 99 for 3.5 years is insane; for that reason alone an alternative to the tunnel should be pursued."

"The tunnel is the right solution – there were many "naysayers" when the Space Needle was built, but its benefits to the city are incalculable."

"Please focus on transit - access to transit, priority for movement of transit, incentives for residents/employers to use transit as the primary commuting option."

"I think that this is well though out and I like that all moving parts are working and coordinating together."

Advertisement for the Open Houses

- Postcards were sent to the project mailing list and distributed throughout the community at public gathering places, e.g. libraries, community centers, and other public buildings.
- Posters were hung throughout the corridor in storefronts, residential buildings, and public bulletin boards.
- Advertisements were placed in 22 newspapers, nine of which reach low income or minority populations.
- Fourteen community newsletters published an announcement of the meetings.
- Two e-mail announcements were sent to the project e-mail list.
- Participation at community briefings and festivals such as the Seattle Maritime Festival, University District Street Fair, and the Fremont Fair.
- Media briefing that prompted newspaper articles encouraging attendance at the meetings.

Other Agency Comments

Other agencies had the opportunity to comment on the information presented in the public meetings as well.

The Port of Seattle identified several issues of concern specific to the freight and shipping community. In general, they expressed a desire to see more analytical work done to ensure that the design for the Viaduct provides adequate mobility for all modes of travel.

The Port outlined several issues relating to freight mobility and congestion levels.

- Need to address levels of congestion near the container terminals.
- Need adequate provisions for through-traffic, particularly over-legal loads, beyond the Alaskan Way surface road.
- How will flammable materials be transported if a tunnel is built?
- Need to ensure BNSF's rail yards can operate efficiently.
- Need to measure impact of rail crossings on traffic and streetcar reliability if it is placed on Alaskan Way surface. Rail traffic is forecasted to double from 2001-2020.

They also expressed concerns related to access to cruise and ship terminals, and to waterfront conference locations.

- Ensure that charter buses, delivery trucks, and taxis can access terminals and maneuver around the area efficiently. Provide space for vehicles to reverse direction.
- Ensure pedestrian access to the World Trade Center, Bell Harbor Conference Center, and Port Headquarters.

The Seattle City Council had the opportunity to hear a broad summary of comments from the public meetings, and to ask questions about the information presented at the meetings.

Some of questions raised during the Council workshop are listed below.

- Will we need to reconfigure downtown streets to accommodate traffic?
- Will we have freight-dedicated lanes?
- Can we use this as an opportunity to build permanent programs that increase pedestrian access and decrease overall SOV trips to downtown?
- Are we doing everything we can to minimize cost?
- Do we have an accurate estimate of the economic impacts of the construction alternatives? What about the cost difference? We need to know in order to make an informed decision.
- Do we need a fire drill to understand the real impacts of a complete closure of SR 99?

For the proposed lowered Aurora Avenue improvements, several council members wanted clarification on how it would improve mobility in the area. They also expressed concern about the cost and how it fits into financing for the overall plan for the Viaduct. There was enthusiasm for the plan to create pedestrian-friendly open space on the waterfront by putting a lid over Steinbrueck Park.