

SR 99: ALASKAN WAY VIADUCT & SEAWALL REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

Public Involvement Technical Memorandum S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project Environmental Assessment

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ACRONYMS

AWVSRP	Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program
City	City of Seattle
DSA	Downtown Seattle Association
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
Project	SR 99: S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project
SODO	South of Downtown
SR	State Route
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

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Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

The SR 99: S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project (the Project) was announced in March 2007 as one of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program's (AWVSRP) Moving Forward projects.

The Project would replace the existing viaduct structure between S. Holgate and S. King Streets and modify access to, from, and across SR 99. During construction, State Route (SR) 99 and local traffic would be periodically affected. These changes, both temporary and permanent, require a high level of public involvement, communications, and outreach. This technical memorandum reviews outreach activities for the Project from March 14, 2007, through May 31, 2008.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires agencies to inform the public and involve them in decisions that affect the community. This includes providing public notice of NEPA-related hearings, holding public meetings, and making environmental documents available to inform decision-makers and those persons and agencies that may be interested or affected.

The primary communication tools used for the Project include website updates, community briefings, open houses, fairs and festivals, and e-mail updates. Briefings allow the team to inform, update, and gain feedback from project stakeholders and community organizations, while open houses and fairs and festivals provide venues for reaching a larger audience. At each event, the AWVSRP team provides fact sheets and other materials that describe the Project and its benefits and explain how the Project fits into the overall viaduct replacement program.

Prior to March 2007 and the announcement of the Moving Forward projects, public involvement activities relating to the south end were part of the overall viaduct replacement program. As the AWVSRP has progressed, the alternatives considered were shaped by community concerns identified through public meetings and comments, various feasible engineering solutions presented to the public, potential project effects, and funding constraints. For example, as alternatives and their costs were presented to the public and community and tribal leaders, early concepts were judged to be too costly. As a result, the lead agencies scaled back alternatives. Comments from the Port of Seattle and BNSF Railway led to the development of new concepts in the south end that better balance the needs of general purpose traffic with freight and rail operations. This evolution has led to the current proposed action under consideration in this Environmental Assessment.

For a more detailed discussion of previous public involvement activities, refer to Appendix A, Agency and Public Outreach, of the *SR 99: Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement* and *SR 99: Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement*.

Chapter 2 PROJECT OUTREACH

2.1 Public Meetings

2.1.1 Open Houses

The AWVSRP team hosted an open house at the Grand Central Arcade in Pioneer Square on August 22, 2007. The purpose of this event was to provide information about upcoming construction in the neighborhood, as well as to gather general feedback, receive ideas from neighbors about their needs during construction, and determine the best method for communicating with businesses and residents. While the open house did not focus exclusively on the Project, the Project was highlighted because of its proximity to the Pioneer Square neighborhood.

The open house attracted about 75 attendees. Representatives of the AWVSRP and Seattle City Light staffed stations set up around the room to talk with the public and answer questions. The stations highlighted information on the Moving Forward projects, which include viaduct repairs between Columbia Street and Yesler Way, electrical line relocation, and the S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project.

A priority of the communications team was to gather feedback about community needs during construction. The most common responses included pedestrian access, parking, and transit and traffic flow.

A second priority was to determine how best to communicate with the Pioneer Square community. Through multiple forms of feedback (written comment forms, flip charts, etc.), it was evident that the community prefers to receive information via e-mail. Other methods selected included use of the AWVSRP website (www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/viaduct) and regular community briefings.

The AWVSRP team, King County, and the City of Seattle hosted a South Downtown Projects Preview on April 28, 2008. The purpose of this open house was to update citizens about upcoming construction projects in the south downtown area, including the S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project. The event highlighted six major projects planned by the State, the City of Seattle, and the Port of Seattle. Team members described why each project is necessary and what the expected benefits would be. They also described how the State and City are coordinating their construction activities and investing in projects to keep people and goods moving during construction, particularly during the S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project.

Approximately 60 people attended this event. Feedback was collected through comment forms and conversations with team members. Of the written comments that were submitted, one asked the AWVSRP to consider making Third Avenue S. to S. Holgate Street passable, one asked to make W. Marginal Way from the First Avenue S. Bridge to S. Spokane Street more like a freeway, and one complimented the team on the amount of information provided at the event.

During February and May 2008, the AWVSRP team, King County, and the City of Seattle held four additional open houses—one each in Ballard and downtown and two in West Seattle. Although these meetings were related to the AWVSRP's Central Waterfront project, citizens also received updates on all of the Moving Forward projects, including the S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project.

2.1.2 Scoping Meetings

Public Scoping Meetings

The AWVSRP team hosted two public scoping meetings for the Project. The purpose of the meetings was to gather public comments on environmental issues that should be considered in the Project's Environmental Assessment and inform the public about the proposed design from S. Holgate Street to S. King Street. The first scoping meeting was held on September 24, 2007, at the Starbucks Support Center in South of Downtown (SODO), and the second was held on September 26, 2007, at Madison Middle School in West Seattle. Combined attendance for the two events was approximately 110 people.

Both meetings followed a standard format: attendees were invited to read program display boards, fact sheets, and folios and speak with program staff. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Deputy Secretary Dave Dye and AWVSRP Director Ron Paananen gave a 15-minute presentation focused on the proposed S. Holgate Street to S. King Street design. Throughout each meeting, attendees were encouraged to give their comments and suggestions.

Meeting attendees could give comments by completing paper surveys or submitting handwritten comments. Laptops were set up and a Web-based survey was available for attendees who preferred to complete an electronic comment form.

The electronic and paper comment forms consisted of the following questions:

- WSDOT and FHWA welcome your input on potential environmental impacts on the South Holgate Street to South King Street Viaduct Replacement Project. We will study a number of factors during the

environmental assessment process, such as transportation, land use, visual quality and air quality. Are there specific issues related to these topics that we should consider?

- What additional environmental issues should be considered?
- Do you have any ideas how we might mitigate the environmental effects?
- Would you like to be added to the project mailing list?
- How did you hear about the scoping meeting?
- Additional comments?

The most common topics suggested for consideration in the Environmental Assessment included transportation, bicycle/pedestrian mobility, air quality, and water quality. Community members were concerned about delays during rush hours, increased commute times, and the movement of freight. Attendees said that the environmental process should consider effects on bicycle commuters and others who use the bicycle-pedestrian path between SODO and West Seattle. Air and water quality comments focused on decreased water quality due to construction and decreased air quality caused by surface street congestion during construction.

Suggestions for how the project team should mitigate environmental effects included monitoring traffic patterns, decreasing pollution-causing gridlock, and improving bicycle and pedestrian mobility. Several attendees also discussed the proposed design for the viaduct's south end. Some believed that the proposed design for the S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project would rule out certain replacement options for the central waterfront section of the viaduct. They also commented on the proposed placement of exit ramps, the safety of the design, and the timeline of the design's construction.

Agency and Tribal Scoping Meetings

The AWVSRP team also hosted a separate agency and tribal scoping meeting for the Project. The purpose of the meeting was to gather agency and tribal comments on environmental issues that should be considered in the Project's Environmental Assessment and to inform attendees about the proposed viaduct design from S. Holgate Street to S. King Street.

The meeting was held prior to the general public scoping meeting on September 24, 2007, at the Starbucks Support Center. Project staff gave a presentation that included information on design, potential traffic and transit effects, construction schedules, and environmental assessment discipline areas. Twenty people attended.

The following agencies and tribes were invited to the meeting:

- Washington State Ferries
- Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)
- Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)
- City of Seattle
- Port of Seattle
- Public Facilities District
- Public Stadium Authority
- King County Department of Transportation
- King County Metro
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Sound Transit
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 10
- Washington State Department of Ecology
- Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
- Muckleshoot Tribe
- Snoqualmie Tribe
- Suquamish Tribe
- Tulalip Tribe
- Yakama Nation
- Puget Sound Clean Air Agency
- Maritime Administration
- Federal Transit Administration
- Federal Railroad Administration
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Puget Sound Regional Council

After the project team presented information on the 15 environmental discipline areas to be studied, the agencies had an opportunity to provide feedback. Many of the agencies provided detailed comments on what should be studied within each environmental discipline area, and some listed additional issues to be studied. Those issues included construction effects, specifically temporary routes; cumulative effects across several construction projects; and changes to zoning in the SODO neighborhood.

2.2 Fairs and Festivals

From March 2007 through May 2008, the AWVSRP team hosted an informational booth at 30 fairs, festivals, and farmers markets throughout the

Seattle area. Approximately 4,000 people visited the AWVSRP booth at the events listed in Exhibit 2-1.

Fairs and festivals are an important way to engage members of the public, especially those who may not attend formal informational briefings or public meetings. At these events, the program team seeks to raise awareness of the viaduct replacement program, answer questions, and collect feedback.

The AWVSRP booth featured a freestanding tri-fold display, which provided an overview of the six Moving Forward projects and showed their locations along SR 99. Materials available to the public included a Moving Forward projects folio, which described the early action projects, and six fact sheets, including one for the Project. Translated copies of the folio were available in Vietnamese, Mandarin Chinese, Tagalog, and Spanish.

Most festival attendees had limited knowledge about current program activities. Once informed about the six Moving Forward projects, visitors were often enthusiastic about the program's progress and upcoming construction. Other topics of interest included cost, funding, and schedule for the Moving Forward projects; traffic disruptions during construction; the condition of the seawall and the plan to fix it; and planning for the viaduct's central waterfront.

Exhibit 2-1. 2007/2008 Events Featuring an AWVSRP Information Booth

Date	Briefing
May 19–20, 2007	U-District Street Fair
June 9–10, 2007	Pagdiriwang Philippine Festival
June 16–17, 2007	Fremont Fair
June 23, 2007	Magnolia Farmers Market
June 24, 2007	West Seattle Farmers Market
July 1, 2007	Broadway Farmers Market
July 1, 2007	Hispanic Seafair
July 7, 2007	Pioneer Square Fire Festival
July 11, 2007	Wallingford Farmers Market
July 13–15, 2007	West Seattle Summer Fest
July 14–15, 2007	Chinatown-International District Festival
July 18, 2007	Boeing Safety Fair
July 20, 2007	"Picnic at the Pier" Concert Series
July 25, 2007	Maple Leaf Summer Social

**Exhibit 2-1. 2007/2008 Events Featuring an AWVSRP Information Booth
(continued)**

Date	Briefing
July 28–29, 2007	Ballard Seafood Festival
Aug. 3, 2007	Boeing Safety Fair
Aug. 3–4, 2007	Magnolia Summer Festival
Aug. 11, 2007	Magnolia Farmers Market
Aug. 12, 2007	West Seattle Farmers Market
Aug. 18–19, 2007	Central Area Community Festival
Aug. 26, 2007	Broadway Farmers Market
Aug. 29, 2007	Columbia City Farmers Market
Aug. 30, 2007	Queen Anne Farmers Market
Sept. 1–3, 2007	Bumbershoot
Oct. 24, 2007	Starbucks Transportation Fairs
Nov. 14, 2007	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center Transportation Fair
Dec. 11, 2007	Pemco Transportation Fair
Feb. 2–3, 2008	Tet Festival
March 24, 2008	Women’s Transportation Seminar
May 17–18, 2008	U-District Street Fair

To attract more visitors to the booth, team members offered Washington state road maps, branded magnets that promoted the AWVSRP and information line, and branded pens that promoted the AWVSRP and website.

A sign-up sheet was available for visitors who wanted to receive monthly program updates by mail or e-mail. Throughout the summer of 2007, 213 festival attendees signed up for the program mailing list.

2.3 Community and Stakeholder Briefings

From March 2007 through May 2008, the AWVSRP team attended more than 80 community and stakeholder briefings, listed in Exhibit 2-2. Social service providers in the area were also briefed (refer to Chapter 4 of the Project’s Environmental Justice Technical Memorandum for additional information). These meetings are a concerted effort to reach out to project stakeholders and affected communities and provide them with updated information on the program.

Exhibit 2-2. 2007/2008 Community and Stakeholder Briefings

Date	Briefing
March 21, 2007	Statewide Project Engineer Conference
April 9, 2007	University of Washington Structural and Geotechnical Engineering Capstone Design class
May 5, 2007	University of Washington Transportation and Construction Seminar
May 10, 2007	Whitman College Alumni
May 14, 2007	Belltown Community Council, Housing and Land Use Committee
May 22, 2007	North Seattle Industrial Association
May 22, 2007	Manufacturing Industrial Council Executive Committee
May 23, 2007	University Lions Club
May 23, 2007	Downtown Seattle Association (DSA) Viaduct Task Force
May 30, 2007	Allied Arts
June 12, 2007	First Hill Improvement Association
June 14, 2007	Downtown District Council
June 14, 2007	Metropolitan Expressway and Obayashi Corp.
June 14, 2007	Park Hill Rotary Club
June 14, 2007	Waterfront Landings Condo Association, Board of Directors
June 19, 2007	City of Seattle Freight Mobility Advisory Committee
June 26, 2007	Waterfront Neighborhood Association
July 6, 2007	Puget Sound Regional Council, Regional Freight Mobility Roundtable
July 18, 2007	Pioneer Square Preservation Board
July 19, 2007	Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce, Transportation Committee
July 19, 2007	Transit Integration Group
July 25, 2007	DSA Viaduct Task Force
July 26, 2007	South End Freight Stakeholder Group
July 27, 2007	International Delegation from the World Affairs Council
Aug. 14, 2007	Feet First
Aug. 21, 2007	DSA Viaduct Task Force
Aug. 31, 2007	Public Stadium Authority (Seahawks)
Sept. 5, 2007	Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board
Sept. 5, 2007	Public Facilities District (Mariners)

Exhibit 2-2. 2007/2008 Community and Stakeholder Briefings (continued)

Date	Briefing
Sept. 5, 2007	Coast Guard
Sept. 10, 2007	International District Forum
Sept. 13, 2007	Society of American Military Engineers
Sept. 13, 2007	Bemis Building owner
Sept. 13, 2007	Union Pacific Railroad
Sept. 14, 2007	Eastside Transportation Partnership
Sept. 17, 2007	Committee for the Children
Sept. 18, 2007	City of Seattle Freight Mobility Advisory Committee
Sept. 18, 2007	South County Area Transportation Board
Sept. 20, 2007	Parking and Access Review Committee
Sept. 20, 2007	Cascade Bicycle Club
Sept. 27, 2007	Social Service Providers (all downtown providers were invited to attend)
Oct. 3, 2007	DSA
Oct. 4, 2007	Seattle Design Commission
Oct. 9, 2007	Pioneer Square Community Association, Economic Development Committee
Oct. 9, 2007	American Society for Metals International, Puget Sound Chapter
Oct. 10, 2007	Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board
Oct. 11, 2007	Working Families for an Elevated Solution
Oct. 18, 2007	Pioneer Square Community Association, Public Spaces Committee
Oct. 23, 2007	North Seattle Industrial Association
Nov. 8, 2007	Downtown District Council
Nov. 8, 2007	Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering International, Seattle Section
Nov. 19, 2007	Mountains to Sound Greenway
Dec. 5, 2007	Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board
Dec. 6, 2007	Waterfront Landing Condominiums, Board of Directors
Dec. 7, 2007	Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce, Viaduct Task Force
Dec. 10, 2007	Belltown Community Council
Dec. 20, 2007	Seattle Design Commission
Jan. 17, 2008	Transit Integration Group
Jan. 22, 2008	Manufacturing Industrial Council

Exhibit 2-2. 2007/2008 Community and Stakeholder Briefings (continued)

Date	Briefing
Feb. 13, 2008	SODO Business Association
Feb. 13, 2008	West Seattle Chamber of Commerce
Feb. 14, 2008	Duwamish Transportation Management Association
Feb. 14, 2008	University of Washington Structural and Geotechnical Engineering Capstone Design class
Feb. 19, 2008	City of Seattle Freight Mobility Advisory Committee
March 5, 2008	Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board
March 7, 2008	Puget Sound Regional Council, Regional Freight Mobility Roundtable
March 7, 2008	Mariners and Public Facilities District
March 10, 2008	Mariners Board of Directors
March 10, 2008	Seahawks and Public Stadium Authority
March 12, 2008	Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board
March 18, 2008	City of Seattle Freight Mobility Advisory Committee
March 20, 2008	Seattle Design Commission
March 21, 2008	Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board
March 25, 2008	North Seattle Industrial Association
April 1, 2008	City of Seattle Freight Mobility Advisory Committee
April 3, 2008	Seattle Design Commission
April 9, 2008	Ballard District Council
April 10, 2008	Mariners
April 15, 2008	City of Seattle Freight Mobility Advisory Committee
April 17, 2008	Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce, Transportation Committee
April 22, 2008	North Seattle Industrial Association
April 23, 2008	Waterfront Neighborhood Association
April 30, 2008	Queen Anne Community Council, Transportation Committee
May 5, 2008	Downtown Seattle Association, Viaduct Task Force
May 20, 2008	Magnolia Community Club
May 21, 2008	Belltown Business Association

The Project would affect many residents and businesses, such as the freight industry, railroads, the Port of Seattle, the Pioneer Square neighborhood, and other industrial businesses south of downtown. Outreach efforts focused on

each of these groups, as well as general members of the public that travel on the viaduct.

Questions at each of the briefings varied. Community groups in Belltown, Ballard, and Magnolia tended to have more questions about upgrades to the Battery Street Tunnel, while community groups in Pioneer Square, SODO, and West Seattle tended to have more questions about the S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project and electrical line relocation.

In general, community groups were interested in the construction schedule for each of the Moving Forward projects and how they overlap with one another; traffic effects during construction and strategies for mitigating those effects; construction coordination with City of Seattle projects; and the process for determining what will replace the viaduct on the central waterfront.

Comments received from these meetings have played an important role in shaping the design of the Project. For example, the bicycle community suggested that the bicycle/pedestrian path on the west side of SR 99 run along the west side of the tail track instead of the east side. This change would mean bicyclists no longer have to wait for trains at the S. Atlantic Street intersections, and they would have a direct connection to E. Marginal Way S. It would also improve safety and visibility for novice and experienced bicyclists. This change is being considered for the final design of the Project.

2.4 Social Service Provider Interviews

Interviews were held with social service providers in the project area to ensure that these organizations are engaged in the decision-making process and to discuss their concerns and potential effects on their property and/or operations. Questions were posed to the agency to understand its purpose, clients, and operations, and agency representatives were given the opportunity to discuss the potential issues that the Project might present. Exhibit 2-3 lists agencies and organizations that were interviewed in 2007.

Exhibit 2-3. 2007 Social Service Provider Interviews

Date of Meeting	Organization
July 18, 2007	St. Martin de Porres Shelter
July 24, 2007	Compass Center
July 27, 2007	OK Hotel
August 15, 2007	Bread of Life Mission
November 5, 2007	Lighthouse for the Blind
November 7, 2007	Mission to Seafarers

2.5 Written Materials

2.5.1 Advertisements

Two types of advertisements were sent out for the Project's public scoping meetings in September 2007. The first was a legal notice that discussed the proposed S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement and how the public could comment on it. WSDOT is required to provide public notice of NEPA-related hearings, public meetings, and the availability of environmental documents. The required legal notice appeared in the *Seattle Times* and the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* on September 13, 2007.

A second type of notification was also provided; it was a brief paragraph on community calendars. This is not required, but helped spread the word about the Project's public scoping meetings. A brief description of the meetings was published in the *Seattle Times*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, and the *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*. The calendar notices contained information on the purpose of the public scoping meetings and details on their times and locations.

2.5.2 Posters and Postcards

In order to best communicate events such as the public scoping meetings and open houses, and to garner as much participation as possible, the AWVSRP communications team developed a variety of posters and postcards.

The following materials were developed for the two public scoping meetings:

- A postcard advertising the date, time, location, and purpose of the meetings was mailed to approximately 5,500 residents and businesses in the SODO and West Seattle areas.
- A poster advertising the date, time, location, and purpose of the meetings was hung in approximately 40 SODO and West Seattle area businesses, community centers, and libraries.

The following materials were developed for the Pioneer Square open house:

- An invitation announcing the date, time, location, and purpose of the open house, as well as project fact sheets, was mailed to approximately 2,500 residents and businesses in the Pioneer Square vicinity.
- A postcard advertising the date, time, location, and purpose of the open house was mailed to a larger audience of approximately 4,500 residents and businesses in the Pioneer Square vicinity.

- A postcard advertising the date, time, location, and purpose of the open house was hand-delivered to approximately 150 businesses in the heart of Pioneer Square.

The following materials were developed for the South Downtown Projects Preview:

- An informational newsletter, which described upcoming south downtown projects and also served as an invitation to the open house, was sent to more than 7,000 addresses in the south downtown, International District, and Harbor Island communities.
- Postcards advertising the date, time, location, and purpose of the open house were distributed by members of the Alaskan Way Viaduct Stakeholder Advisory Committee and were placed at Seattle City Hall and other public buildings. An electronic version of the advertisement was forwarded to Pioneer Square e-mail lists.
- Posters were placed in public buildings and popular businesses in the Pioneer Square, International District, SODO, and downtown neighborhoods.

2.5.3 Information Displays

Fourteen informational display boards were created for the Project's public scoping meetings in September 2007. The display boards covered the following topics:

- An overview map and description of the Moving Forward projects, including the S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement.
- Goals for the Moving Forward projects, which include safety, mobility, and fiscal responsibility.
- Timeline for the AWVSRP.
- How the program team is coordinating with other SODO transportation projects.
- Viaduct safety issues.
- Issues to be addressed in the Project's Environmental Assessment.
- The proposed design for the Project.
- The proposed design's compatibility with various central waterfront options.
- How the proposed design improves traffic and transit flow.
- Potential transit routes.

- How the proposed design accommodates pedestrians and bicyclists.
- How the proposed design addresses freight needs.
- Potential freight routes.
- Public involvement contact information.

Fifteen display boards were created for the Pioneer Square open house in August 2007. While this event focused on several of the Moving Forward projects, a display showing a draft design concept for the Project was included.

The AWVSRP team produced 10 display boards for the April 2008 South Downtown Projects Preview. The S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project was one of the highlighted projects. Two boards described the necessity and benefits of the Project and provided a map of the project area. Another board showed the Project's construction timeline, as well as the timelines for other major south downtown projects planned by the State, the City, and the Port of Seattle.

2.5.4 Project Fact Sheets

After the announcement of the six Moving Forward projects in March 2007, a folio was created to provide an overview of all of the projects, and fact sheets were created for each of the individual projects.

The S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project fact sheet describes the work that will be done, reasons for pursuing the Project, the end results, and what construction will be like. The fact sheet is updated as project information changes; as a result, it was updated five times in 2007—in May, August, September, October, and December—and in January and April of 2008. The Project's fact sheet is used as a handout at fairs and festivals, community and stakeholder briefings, and public meetings. It is also available on the AWVSRP website.

2.6 Electronic Communications

2.6.1 Website

The AWVSRP website (www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/viaduct) provides access to a wealth of information about the program. The public is able to review information about the Moving Forward projects, receive answers to commonly asked questions, and learn about opportunities for public involvement. The website is also an important way for the public to submit their questions and concerns to the program team. The site is updated on a

regular basis to ensure that current and accurate information is always available.

In August 2007, the communications team created individual webpages for each of the Moving Forward projects, including one for the Project. The Project webpage (www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/Viaduct/southend.htm) provides a summary of the Project, explains why the Project is necessary, and describes construction effects and when they are expected to occur. In its first 4 months, the Project webpage was viewed approximately 700 times.

The AWVSRP website also played a role in advertising the public meetings and disseminating meeting materials for the Project. The website's home page was used to highlight the dates, times, and locations for the public scoping meetings, the Pioneer Square open house, and the South Downtown Projects Preview. The communications team also made meeting materials and a summary of public comments available on the website's library page.

2.6.2 Mailing Lists

The communications team maintains a mailing list for those wishing to receive regular program updates. Approximately 4,300 people have subscribed to this mailing list, and updates are sent via e-mail on a monthly basis. The e-mail updates were used to notify the public about the Project scoping meetings, the Pioneer Square open house, and the South Downtown Projects Preview, as well as the AWVSRP team's participation in local fairs and festivals.

2.6.3 Information Line

The communications team established a new toll-free information line (1-888-AWV-LINE) in August 2007. While the previous version was an automated line that only allowed callers to listen to project information and/or leave messages, the new information line presents callers with five options:

- Talk to a staff member to discuss current construction activities or report noise or access complaints.
- Talk to a staff member to receive general program information, such as news and events.
- Talk to a staff member regarding media requests.
- Leave a message.
- Request materials in Braille, in large format, or in other languages.

The information line also offers a translation service for those who speak Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, or Tagalog. The information line number is heavily advertised on all communication materials, including fact sheets, newsletters, and information displays.

Comments are entered directly into the program's public comment database, while questions are forwarded to the appropriate project team member for a response. Responses are made via a follow-up phone call or other method, if requested by the caller.

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Chapter 3 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Each month the program team receives numerous comments from the public, including e-mails (sent to viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov), letters, and telephone calls (via the AWVSRP information line). Additionally, we receive correspondence forwarded from the Governor's Office, State Legislators, County Council offices, and City Council members.

The communications team responds promptly to all comments. They are compiled and tracked in a database, which is used to analyze comment trends and shape the program's public involvement efforts.

From March 2007 through April 2008, the program team received 644 public comments. Monthly summaries are available on the AWVSRP website at www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/Viaduct/library-publiccomments.htm.

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