

Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program April 2012- April 2013 Marketing Plan – Draft

The Situation

Construction is underway to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct along the waterfront, next to Pioneer Square, and near the sports stadiums. Traffic detours, street closures, and parking removal will take place during construction.

There has been and will continue to be extensive media coverage of construction. Media attention may discourage customers from visiting businesses and destinations near construction because they perceive it is too difficult to reach the neighborhoods and find parking.

Marketing Goal

The goal of this marketing plan is to retain existing customers and attract new customers to the businesses and destinations in Pioneer Square and the sports stadiums, along the waterfront, and in the Pike Place Market during construction of the SR 99 bored tunnel and its associated projects.

The geographic areas to be addressed with this marketing plan include:

- Central waterfront from the west side of First Avenue to Elliott Bay, and from Bell Street Cruise Terminal to the Seattle Ferry Terminal, including Western Avenue south of Pike Street to the Pike Place Market.
- Pioneer Square Historic District
- Sports stadium area north of S. Atlantic Street.

Marketing Objectives

The goal of the marketing plan will be achieved through the following objectives, which may be prioritized differently to meet the needs of the specific neighborhood affected by construction:

1. Educate existing customers on how to get to Pioneer Square, the waterfront, Pike Place Market and sports stadiums during construction, including how to find affordable, safe, short-term parking in close proximity and how to reach it.
2. Coordinate with and support existing neighborhood marketing efforts and events, and related projects; provide parking and travel information to individual businesses and major destinations.

3. Entice existing and new customers by highlighting reasons to visit, including making SR 99 tunnel construction an event (i.e., tunnel groundbreaking, delivery of boring machine).

Parking Mitigation Strategies

WSDOT and SDOT are considering a range of mitigation strategies to ensure that short-term parking is available in close proximity, and is safe and affordable. Potential strategies that may be part of or supported by this marketing plan include:

- Partner with private garages to provide a low, short-term parking rate
- Make physical improvements within key garages and to walking paths to increase safety and enhance the customer experience
- Create temporary on-street parking
- Shuttle visitors between key destinations and parking
- Build a new parking garage
- Improve wayfinding to destinations and parking
- Expand e-Park program to Pioneer Square and central waterfront
- Change on-street parking policies and practices
- Implement centralized valet parking service

A final list of strategies will be agreed to by June 2012.

Marketing Strategies

- Provide marketing that is targeted to each neighborhood district, and support their existing brand and marketing efforts.
- Test marketing messages for effectiveness prior to implementation.
- Provide targeted information that can be easily integrated into existing communications (i.e., not stand alone messages, images).
- Show customers multiple routes to reach the neighborhood districts, and where to find safe and affordable parking.
- Travel routes and parking locations should be focused on the east side of Alaskan Way, so customers are not driving through the major construction areas.
- Utilize businesses and destinations as a way to reach customers – at the counter, through existing communication channels, etc.
- Improve signs from major routes into the city identifying neighborhood destinations through the construction zones.
- Provide one central location for customers and businesses to find information about travel routes (multi-modal), parking availability, areas of construction, etc. Information should be accessible from a variety of platforms, including mobile devices.
- Utilize an integrated and balanced approach of both earned and purchased media.

- Take advantage of the marketing effort to attract parking garages to join the program to increase the availability of affordable parking for customers.

Target Audiences

- Customers of existing businesses (retail and professional)
- Customers and employees of major tourist destinations (i.e., hotels, Seattle Aquarium, Pike Place Market, Underground Tour, Space Needle, Seattle Center, Bell Street Cruise Terminal, Seattle Ferry Terminal)
- Visitors to Seattle via cruise, conventions, in hotels
- Baseball, soccer, concert, and football (professional and college) game attendees
- Special event attendees at CenturyLink and Safeco stadiums
- Metropolitan Improvement District ambassadors

The target audiences may vary depending on the neighborhood, time of year and destination.

Brand Concept

A brand will be developed that communicates parking availability in the affected neighborhoods. Key elements of the brand will include:

- A simple, internationally recognized parking icon that takes advantage of existing branding, as appropriate.
- Identification of all parking in the neighborhoods, regardless of price.
- Unique identifiers for garages with special rates and e-Park garages.

After the brand has been developed and tested, it will be used on signage, web pages, collateral material, social media, and other marketing materials.

Key Messages

- There is available and affordable parking during construction of the SR 99 tunnel.
- It's business as usual in [DESTINATION] so know before you go. Find the easiest way to get there and where your parking spot is waiting for you.
- Be the first to know. Visit [DESTINATION], and watch our waterfront/city/tunnel take shape.

Measures of Success

- Customer counts and revenue at major neighborhood destinations are at the same levels as before construction began. Candidate destinations include:

- Pioneer Square – Klondike Museum, Underground Tour
- Waterfront – Ivar’s Restaurants, Seattle Aquarium, Argosy
- Western Avenue – McKinnon Furniture
- Pike Place Market?
- Pedestrian counts in the target neighborhoods are at the same levels as before construction began. Downtown Seattle Association conducts pedestrian counts at 17 sites throughout downtown in August and December of each year. Future pedestrian counts at the following locations will be compared to counts completed prior to construction to assess the effectiveness of the marketing program.
 - Pioneer Square – First and Yesler
 - Waterfront – Alaskan & Seneca
 - Waterfront – Alaskan Way & Pike Street Hillclimb
- Customers perceive they can visit Pioneer Square, the waterfront, and sports stadiums during construction, and there is affordable parking that is easy to find.
 - Downtown Seattle Association conducts a bi-annual survey of residents in a four-county region to understand how Puget Sound residents view downtown Seattle. Past surveys have found that ease and price of parking are the top reasons why people chose to go to other regional destinations. The results of the 2011 survey will be compared to future results to assess the effectiveness of the marketing program.
 - Business or major destination surveys – Seattle Aquarium, Klondike Museum, others?
- Utilization increases at parking facilities participating in Your Spot.
- Total impressions and earned media coverage.
- Number of businesses/websites that integrate the provided information into their media.

April 2012 –April 2013 Marketing Activities

The following marketing activities will take place over the next year to meet the objectives of this marketing plan (a more detailed work plan will be prepared to support implementation, with input from the marketing subgroup):

Ongoing/Planning

- Develop a communication and media plan that takes into account planned marketing activities over the next 12-months and can be utilized by the businesses and other stakeholders in the affected areas.
- Test key messages and communication channels for reaching the target audiences.
- Hold monthly marketing meetings with representatives from the Downtown Seattle Association, The Alliance for Pioneer Square, Waterfront Historic Association, Pike Place Market, and the sports stadiums.

- Update marketing plan, and communication and media plan quarterly to reflect lessons learned and schedule changes.

Objective 1: Educate existing customers on how to get to Pioneer Square, the waterfront, Pike Place Market, and the sports stadiums during construction, including how to find affordable, safe, short-term parking in close proximity and what routes are open to reach it.

- Develop a web page that contains information about parking (location, price, and availability); travel routes and modes to reach the parking; and interesting events or facts about SR 99 tunnel construction. Use One Bus Away as a model.
 - Conduct search optimization and other analytics to determine best web address, search terms, etc.
 - Identify geographic boundaries of web page.
- Investigate a smart phone app that allows easy access to the web page.
- Place paid advertising for launch of web page.
- Develop collateral that can be used by businesses and major destinations to distribute parking information to existing and new customers.
- Utilize earned media to publicize parking mitigation strategies, including:
 - New on-street parking along Alaskan Way
 - Added garages to Your Spot program
 - Re-routing of Alaskan Way
 - New way-finding signs
 - Expanded e-park program
 - Start of visitor shuttle
- Conduct training sessions for DSA's MID ambassadors so they can provide information about parking and travel routes to the affected neighborhoods.
- Work with Google, Inrix, and others to provide accurate information to travelers after changes are made to travel routes (i.e., Alaskan Way detour).
- Integrate information regarding how customers and visitors can use public transit as an alternative to driving if applicable to neighborhood.

Objective 2: Coordinate with and support existing neighborhood marketing efforts and events, and related projects; provide parking and travel information to individual businesses and major destinations.

- Create and distribute user-friendly toolkit for businesses and major destinations to link to or access web page, provide parking information to customers, etc.
- Conduct door-to-door outreach to assist businesses in establishing links to web page.
- Attend neighborhood events to provide information and respond to questions on how to access web page.
- Place collateral in major tourist destinations, including the Convention Center and hotels.

- Work with neighborhood organizations and event hosts to provide tailored collateral and information to support major events, including:
 - First Thursday art walks in Pioneer Square
 - Seattle Maritime Festival on the waterfront
 - Mother’s Day events on the waterfront
 - Cruise ship season
 - First Mariner’s home game, and day games
 - Seattle Sounder’s day games
 - University of Washington graduation
 - Waterfront Whimsea Family Day
 - DSA’s Summer Events Guide
 - Classic Weekend on the waterfront
 - Rock ‘n Roll Marathon
 - “Sunday strolls” and similar events on the waterfront
 - Pioneer Square Fire Festival
 - Save the Date: Wedding on the Waterfront
 - Arrival/opening of ferris wheel on Pier 57
 - University of Washington Husky games at CenturyLink Field
 - Seattle Seahawks games
 - Trail to Treasurer tours
 - Seafair events
 - Summer concert in Pioneer Square
 - Seattle Marathon 10k Run for the Next 50
 - Halloween on the waterfront
 - Pioneer Square community tree lighting

Objective 3: Entice existing and new customers by highlighting reasons to visit, including making SR 99 tunnel construction an event (i.e., tunnel groundbreaking, delivery of boring machine).

- Utilize earned media to advertise tunnel construction activities that will give customers another reason to visit neighborhoods, including:
 - Milepost 31 First Thursday speaker series
 - Beginning of tunnel launch pit excavation
 - Arrival of tunnel boring machine model at Milepost 31
 - Installation of viewing platform above excavation area
 - Arrival of tunnel boring machine
 - Public tours of tunnel machine assembly
 - Human interest stories, such as profiles of the tunnel boring machine operator, and other construction team members
- Place paid advertising to advertise public events associated with tunnel construction.
- Work with neighborhood groups to identify opportunities to extend the reach or length of major events by partnering with SR 99 tunnel construction events.

- Work with neighborhood groups to identify opportunities to coordinate with and expand existing neighborhood marketing and advertising efforts
- Coordinate with Elliott Bay Seawall and Waterfront Seattle projects to utilize earned media that will give customers another reason to visit businesses, including:
 - Waterfront/seawall kiosk installation on the waterfront
 - Waterfront Seattle concert series
- Help businesses create SR 99 tunnel construction-related promotions (i.e., cocktail naming contest, etc.)
- Work with Convention Center and hotels to attract tunnel industry conventions to Seattle.

April 2012 –April 2013 Calendar of Activities

Date	Activity	Objective
April 2012	Develop communication and media plan	Ongoing/Planning
April 2012	Test key messages and communication channels	Ongoing/Planning
April 2012	Pitch media story: Milepost 31 guest speaker series	Entice
May 2012	Pitch media story: New on-street parking along Alaskan Way; re-routing of Alaskan Way	Educate
May 2012	Contact online travel information providers to update travel routes on waterfront	Educate
May 2012	Develop construction-related promotions plan	Entice
May 13, 2012	Mariner’s Home Opener	Coordinate/Support
June 2012	Launch parking web page	Educate
June 2012	Pitch media story: New parking web page, added garages to Your Spot program	Educate
June 2012	Pitch media story: tunnel launch pit excavation begins	Entice
June 2012	Pitch media story: TBM model arrives at Milepost 31	Entice
June 2012	Place paid advertising about launch of web page, tunnel launch pit excavation, arrival of TBM model	Educate and Entice
June 9, 2012	University of Washington graduation	Coordinate/Support
June 10, 2012	Waterfront Whimsea Family Fun Day	Coordinate/Support
June 15-17	Classic Weekend, Father’s Day	Coordinate/Support
June 23	Rock ‘n Roll Marathon	Coordinate/Support
June 2012	Distribute “toolkit” for linking to parking web page	Coordinate/Support
June 2012	Finalize collateral; place at major tourist destinations	Educate

Date	Activity	Objective
June 2012	Conduct MID ambassador training session	Educate
June 2012	Conduct door-to-door outreach with toolkit information	Coordinate/Support
June 2012	Attend neighborhood events to provide update on marketing program, web page, etc.	Coordinate/Support
June 2012	DSA's Summer Events Guide	Coordinate/Support
July 2012	Launch app for web page	Educate
July 7, 2012	Pioneer Square Fire Festival	Coordinate/Support
July 22, 2012	Save the Date: Wedding on the Waterfront	Coordinate/Support
July/August	Seafair events	
July 25, 2012	Mariner's day game	Coordinate/Support
July 2012	Arrival of Ferris Wheel at Pier 57	Coordinate/Support
July 2012	Trail to Treasure Tours	Coordinate/Support
Aug. 2012	Waterfront Seattle concert series	Coordinate/Support
Aug 11, 2012	Summer concert in Pioneer Square	Coordinate/Support
Aug. 25, 2012	Seattle Marathon 10k Run for the Next 50	Coordinate/Support
Oct. 2012	Conduct door-to-door outreach with toolkit information	Coordinate/Support
Oct. 31, 2012	Halloween on the Waterfront	Coordinate/Support
Nov. 2012	Attend neighborhood events to provide update on marketing program, web page, etc.	Coordinate/Support
Dec. 6, 2012	First Thursday and Community Tree Lighting	Coordinate/Support
Dec. 2012	Pitch media story: Installation of viewing platform above excavation area	Entice
Dec. 2012	Place paid advertising about viewing platform	Educate and Entice
April 2013	Pitch media story: Tunnel boring machine arrives, assembly begins, public tours	Entice
April 2013	Pitch media story: start of visitor shuttle	Educate
TBD	Pitch media story: expanded e-Park program	Educate
TBD	Pitch media story: new wayfinding signs	Educate
Ongoing	Monthly marketing meetings	Ongoing/Planning
Quarterly	Update marketing, communications, and media plans	Ongoing/Planning