

## **Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program Viaduct Replacement Project NEPA/SEPA Review**

June 1, 2009

### **What is our approach to NEPA/SEPA review?**

The proposed approach has two defining features:

SDEIS, Not a New Study. The approach involves a continuation of the previous studies, rather than commencing an entirely new study. The three lead agencies – FHWA, WSDOT, and the City – would prepare a second Supplemental Draft EIS (“SDEIS-2”). SDEIS-2 would be followed by a Final EIS that encapsulates all of the three previous studies: the DEIS, the first SDEIS (“SDEIS-1”), and SDEIS-2. A ROD would be issued to complete the NEPA process.

Progressive Decision-Making. SDEIS-2 and the FEIS would provide a basis for FHWA to issue a ROD fully approving the Proposed Action, while other transportation and non-roadway elements would be considered as cumulative effects. These other elements would be covered by additional NEPA studies as their planning and design progresses. This approach provides for a comprehensive discussion of the entire program in one document, while also allowing the most time-sensitive elements to be approved quickly, with more time allowed to complete the required studies for several complex but less time-sensitive elements.

How This Works. As shown in the following table, the elements of the AWV Program would be divided into three groups. The **proposed action** replaces the vulnerable portion of SR 99. It includes the tunnel, surface street connections to the tunnel, decommissioning Battery Street Tunnel, viaduct removal, and associated utility relocations. The planned Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program (AWVSRP) also includes **other roadway elements**, including the Alaskan Way surface street and improvements to Mercer Street from Fifth Avenue to Elliott Avenue. The program also includes **non-roadway elements**.

### **What is the difference between the level of detail provided in this SDEIS for the Proposed Action, the other roadway elements, and other non-roadway elements?**

At their heart, NEPA and SEPA are about making informed decisions. For the proposed action the SDEIS-2 would study the proposal in enough detail to make a basic decision (“what should we build to replace the Viaduct?”). The analysis of the proposed action would focus on site-specific impacts, benefits and costs, and mitigation measures that could be taken, similar to the 2004 Draft EIS and SDEIS-1.

The other roadway elements of the overall program are not part of this proposed action, they are reasonably foreseeable future projects. These elements would be analyzed in SDEIS-2 in a more preliminary level of detail – a level of detail analogous to that used in screening-level environmental analysis. This includes the modes, lanes, turning movements, and signals. The exact design and location would not be defined. These elements would be subject to further NEPA study as their planning and design progresses in parallel or following the bored tunnel NEPA process. The non-roadway other elements – including the seawall, promenade, and transit enhancements, would also entail additional environmental work but would not require FHWA approval.

**Proposed Approach to Environmental Reviews for the 2009 Supplemental Draft EIS**

	<b>Proposed Action</b>	<b>Cumulative Effects of AWVSRP</b>	
	<b>Deep Bored Tunnel Alternative</b>	<b>Other Roadway Elements</b>	<b>Non-Roadway Elements</b>
<b>Elements Included</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remove viaduct</li> <li>- Replace SR 99 with tunnel or other limited-access facility</li> <li>- Relocate utilities located on or under viaduct</li> <li>- Surface streets at South Portal</li> <li>- Surface streets at North Portal (Mercer Street Dexter to 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., remove Broad St.)</li> <li>- Decommission Battery Street Tunnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alaskan Way surface street (on location of former viaduct) King to Pike</li> <li>- Connection from Battery to Pike</li> <li>- Mercer Street west corridor improvements (5th to Elliott)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repair or replace seawall</li> <li>- Develop promenade (on location of current Alaskan Way surface street)</li> <li>- 1st Avenue Streetcar</li> <li>- Enhanced Transit Service</li> </ul>
<b>Level of Detail in SDEIS-2 and FEIS</b>	Developed to project level in SDEIS-2	Transportation functions defined (modes, lanes, turning movements, signals).	Planning level only with general descriptions.
<b>FHWA Approvals in Bored tunnel ROD</b>	Fully approved by FHWA in ROD	Not included in ROD.	Not subject to FHWA approval
<b>Post-ROD Studies and Approvals</b>	No further NEPA studies or approvals needed after ROD.	Separate NEPA study(ies) parallel or following Bored Tunnel ROD.	Additional NEPA review and Corps approval needed for seawall. Other elements may require NEPA if federal funding is used. SEPA review also required for all elements.