
From: Bandy, Mark
Sent: Thursday, January 08, 2009 4:01 PM
To: White, John; Paananen, Ron
Subject: FW: Bored tunnel north of Denny - traffic issues

fyi - something we should discuss when you have a moment.

From: Steve Pearce [mailto:Steve.Pearce@Seattle.Gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 08, 2009 3:53 PM
To: Wellander, Chris; Eric Tweit; Bandy, Mark
Cc: McCourt, Randy; Bob Chandler
Subject: Bored tunnel north of Denny - traffic issues

Traffic team

There was a meeting today to talk about the Bored Tunnel north portal that Eric and I attended with some WSDOT and PB people. There is a lot of thinking going into the cost and engineering design of the bored tunnel north portal, but apparently little thinking about traffic issues. We at the City are concerned that traffic is being brushed off as a minor issue but could end up being a very serious design challenge with hidden costs and impacts. Specifically, people seem to be assuming that we can just leave Aurora as it is today north of Denny, even though the bored tunnel traffic volumes and users are somewhat different than the Battery Street Tunnel. The travel demand model predicts 85,000 in the tunnel, compared to 60,000 in the BST, and with no Elliott/Western ramps and with some Queen Anne and NW Seattle traffic now using the Bored Tunnel to get to Mercer, there is going to be a very big weave north of Denny (in both NB and SB directions). When we looked at similar weaves with the Lowered Aurora design in that area we ran into big problems.

We suggested that we move the Downtown ramps to the center, allowing on/off movements from the through lanes to be made without weaving across traffic destined for Downtown. Initial response from the engineering side was concern that this would push us over the cost estimate.

Anyway we need to get together very quickly and talk this through so that we can inform the design at the appropriate time. I think Alec is likely to be sending a similar e-mail to you Chris.

How about next week ?

Steve