

## Team Alignment

### Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement

### Central Waterfront NEPA/SEPA Strategy

April 6, 2009

Deleted: <sp>

Formatted: Normal

Formatted: Left: 1.3", Right: 1.3",  
Top: 1", Bottom: 1"

Formatted: Font: 14 pt, Bold

### What is our NEPA/SEPA strategy?

The environmental team has proposed that we prepare a second Supplemental Draft EIS (SDEIS #2) with a “tiered” approach to our documentation. Under this strategy, the “Bored Tunnel Hybrid” plan, which was conceived during the Partnership Process, would move forward as an alternative in the SDEIS #2. In the SDEIS #2, the Tunnel portion of the plan would be studied to a level that would allow FHWA to get to a record of decision, that is, it would be studied to project-level detail. The rest of the plan, including the Alaskan Way surface street, the Seawall, and other Partnership Plan elements would be studied to a lesser level, or at a program-level. At the end of our environmental process, the City could adopt the plan with the understanding that future environmental work would be required to allow construction on those elements to go forward, though the general configuration would be solidified in this process.

Deleted: Team Alignment¶  
NEPA Strategy¶  
April 6, 2009¶

### What is the difference between “Project level” and “Program level” detail?

At their heart, NEPA and SEPA are about making informed decisions. At the project level we study the proposal in enough detail to make a basic decision (such as “what should we build to replace the Viaduct?”) and the analysis focuses on site-specific impacts, benefits and costs, and mitigation measures that could be taken. At the non-project or program level, we address broad, overall corridor issues, such as general location, mode choices, and area-wide air quality and land use impacts, recognizing up front that a more detailed project-level review will be needed before final decisions can be made.

Deleted: our

Deleted: document

Deleted: To understand the difference between project and program level environmental review you need to recall some basic NEPA principles.

Deleted: its

Deleted: is

Deleted: you

Deleted: a

Deleted: such as

Deleted: should we

Deleted: a bored tunnel

Deleted: then move on to permitting and final design

Deleted:

Deleted: you

Deleted: study a

Deleted: proposal more broadly so you have a general idea of the choices and consequences, but recognize

Deleted: a

Deleted:

Deleted: had

Deleted: scenario

Deleted: This

Deleted: scenario

### What does “No Build” look like?

Since we will be building on the existing Draft and Supplemental Draft EISs already published, we have no need to substantially change the No Build alternative described in those documents. Our no-build alternative says the existing structure will not be in service by our design year.

### Will we carry alternatives other than the deep Bored Tunnel?

Yes and no. We have already studied seven other alternatives in the previous EIS documents. This SDEIS #2 will focus on the eighth alternative, the deep Bored Tunnel.

### Will we have to change our Purpose and Need?

After the “no and no” vote in March of 2007, the Governor, Mayor, and King County Executive knew we had to regroup. In establishing the Partnership Process, they were acknowledging that the way we had thought about our transportation system as analyzed in our previous documents was not going to get us to a decision in the central waterfront. Their work with stakeholders established a revised, though similar, set of values that we will reflect in our Purpose and Need statement. We will add to our

Deleted: <sp>

Formatted: Normal

statement the need to have the central waterfront open, the need to keep business in the waterfront from failing due to long periods of massively disruptive construction, and the need to keep vehicles moving through the City.

**Will this strategy allow us to conclude the environmental process in time to meet our projected construction dates?**

We believe this strategy has the best shot at concluding in time for construction to begin in mid-2011. Setting up the framework to begin is easier, and we believe we have a logical, if not simple, story to tell. We also believe that this strategy goes a long way to mitigate our legal risks. However, there are challenges. We still have to solidify our ESA strategy, our Section 106 strategy, and we have to be prepared to review documents quickly, and with the big picture in mind. Non-project level environmental review may sound simple, but it can be difficult because the level of detail needed is more subjective.