
From: Fleckenstein, Mary [Fleckenstein.Mary@leg.wa.gov]
Sent: Sunday, January 18, 2009 11:19 AM
To: Paananen, Ron
Subject: Kagi's questions

I'd also like to know the answers to her questions.

Thanks.
Mary

-----Original Message-----

From: Fleckenstein, Mary
Sent: Sunday, January 18, 2009 11:11 AM
To: 'Paananen, Ron'; Dye, Dave
Subject: Is this our Big Dig?

Thanks, Ron.

On another point, members are hearing from constituents that this will just be another Big Dig with huge state cost overruns. Can you provide a crisp explanation as to why this bored tunnel is not like the Big Dig, and why your budget estimates are better than Boston's?

Mary

-----Original Message-----

From: Paananen, Ron [mailto:PaananR@wsdot.wa.gov]
Sent: Friday, January 16, 2009 3:47 PM
To: Dye, Dave; Fleckenstein, Mary
Subject: RE: Rep. Dickerson's questions re: AWV

I called Rep. Kagi this afternoon and apologized for canceling today's meeting. She had some pretty straightforward questions. I answered most on the phone. I'll be in Olympia on Tuesday, so I agreed to stop by at 12:30 and walk through the whole program, what is the State, City and County responsibility and how the tunnel works. I will primarily speak from the folio we used this week, as well as the letter signed by the Mayor, Governor and County Executive.

From: Dye, Dave
Sent: Fri 1/16/2009 11:52 AM
To: 'Fleckenstein, Mary'
Subject: RE: Rep. Dickerson's questions re: AWV

Mary - good advice - we're trying to get ourselves ready so we have all of this pulled together and we're just a little flat-footed...as it relates to North King and South Snohomish Counties and the tunnel, they come out very well. We'll loop back with Rep Kagi sooner rather than later...thanks.

-dave

From: Fleckenstein, Mary [mailto:Fleckenstein.Mary@leg.wa.gov]
Sent: Friday, January 16, 2009 11:48 AM
To: Dye, Dave
Subject: RE: Rep. Dickerson's questions re: AWV

David -

Thanks for this. On another member's questions - Rep. Kagi was just told by Ron P's office that her meeting with him this afternoon was cancelled, and he wouldn't be able to talk about now the proposal affects traffic coming out of North King and South Snohomish until January 29th . Really? Two weeks from now? That kind of delay will only increase the heat on an already boiling hot topic for many members. And solidify opinions in a way you don't want them solidified.

Your thoughts?

Mary

From: Dye, Dave [mailto:DyeD@wsdot.wa.gov]
Sent: Friday, January 16, 2009 11:42 AM
To: Fleckenstein, Mary; Paananen, Ron; Dickerson, Rep. Mary Lou; Bailey, Melissa
Cc: Auyoung, Dillon; Ziegler, Jennifer; Hammond, Paula
Subject: RE: Rep. Dickerson's questions re: AWV

Representative Dickerson - I know you would like a full response to your questions today - I'm sorry but we won't be able to make that deadline. We're working hard on preparing full and complete responses and will have that information for you as soon as we can - most likely the end of next week. Obviously, the devil is in the details and many of those remain to be worked out - for instance, I have spoken to a number of SAC members and freight haulers and we will convene a sub-group to help us work out a plan to maximize efficient freight movement on the surface streets given the tunnel selection...that will take longer than even next week so this is very much a work in progress as we continue to refine design details. I will offer the following quick comments to (at least) try and be responsive:

Once the project is completed, this looks like a travel nightmare for residents and freight interests from Magnolia and Ballard, as they attempt to get to SR 99. They've got to go through the surface streets with lots of stoplights - that's a mess. How would this really work for them?

There is no question that the lack of the direct connection at Elliott and Western to SR 99 and the lack of mid-town ramps affect the convenience of single occupant vehicle commuters from Ballard/Magnolia and West Seattle to downtown. However, the direct impact on overall travel time of the tunnel plan is relatively small given the length of time spent on street networks already used as part of those commute routes, so in general, travel time increases of 2-3 minutes are expected. West Seattle trips to points north of downtown are affected the most, but that is not due to the tunnel but rather the loss of direct downtown ramps - a feature common to all options. However, the plan includes additional transit service to provide competitive alternatives for commuting and a parking facility in west Seattle is under discussion. We continue to work with the freight community to hammer out the specifics of how the waterfront surface and SR 99 and I-5 can best be configured to meet their needs in the tunnel option...traffic signal coordination (to eliminate stopping at all lights) is a critical component along with turn radii sized to handle trucks. Obviously, many of them were on record supporting an elevated option and they don't like the tunnel as much, but they certainly like it better than the surface transit option. In short, there may be some inconvenience but far from a travel nightmare.

What's the plan for trucks carrying flammables - and she wants a fuller explanation than "they will use the surface streets." How will this make business sense for them?

Today, trucks hauling flammable materials either use I-5, or they can use SR 99 to the south end of the Battery Street Tunnel during non-peak hours. SR 99 tunnel will prohibit flammable material hauling, so we will work with the those specific haulers (including Ballard Oil) to map out specific routing - that is a work in progress.

What's the deadline to know if the city and county will come up with their share of the money? (And by inference, will the state move forward with the project without assurance that the local partners will have their money in hand when it's needed.)

No set timeframe has been adopted for the jurisdictions to secure their funding. The state has not made specific plans to move forward with only the state project - but it could go forward alone if that is decided later. The key is completing the environmental process and getting under construction in 2011 to meet the opening date in 2015...I assume that gives the city and county some time to secure their fund sources and deliver their projects as part of the overall package.

According to the City's own project manager, the Mercer project actually creates congestion and increases travel times. Why is its completion critical to this project?

I'll get a more detailed briefing on the Mercer Project to you next week. It is important to note, however, the high degree of interest in expanding the 4-lane underpass at SR 99 to 6 lanes and continuation of a 2-way mercer operation to Elliott - opening a more direct route for people and freight to I-5 in the north end...both are included in the tunnel plan. The city's mercer project actually improves travel times in many directions - but a few are longer, including the eastbound movement to I-5. More detail will follow. These improvements really help us manage traffic during construction of the north portal and the cross-over connection needed when the new SR 99 alignment is connected to existing SR 99 near Harrison.

Who's responsible for cost overruns? This is specifically concerning the tunnel.

The three executives agreed that each agency is responsible for their own projects - environmental, design, contracting and cost management - so, each agency is responsible for their own cost increases meaning the state is responsible for overruns on the tunnel. (Note: the current estimate range is \$1.2 billion to \$2.2 billion with our target of \$1.9 billion representing a 60% CEVP number, consistent with the expert review panel's findings in 2006. The total state improvements, which includes the moving forward projects (south end et al) total \$2.8 billion and the program will be managed to that total.)

When you respond, please cc me in the response.

Thanks.

Mary Fleckenstein

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