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**From:** Paananen, Ron  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 11, 2009 10:50 PM  
**To:** Paananen, Ron  
**Subject:** RE: Seattle Times - Opinion from Rep. Geoff Simpson

I should add that in our upcoming outreach presentations over the next 3 or 4 weeks, the City has been pushing for modifications to the presentations to put emphasis on the City Street and Transit components. The flow of the presentation material I saw yesterday goes something like this: big picture map followed by City projects followed by transit projects followed by tunnel project. The City has been very assertive the past couple of days on this order of presentation. They don't want to lead with the tunnel and have everything else seem optional. I have a meeting tomorrow at 9 AM to go over this with Amy and a few others. I only mention it in the context of the issues being raised below about total cost and what is "the project".

On a side note, Dave Gering suggested today that surface Alaskan Way to Elliot / Western should be a State Highway. I told him we don't like to have State Highways dead end (unless it is at a State Border). This reminded me of an issue I have been meaning to chase down. I believe SR 519 actually extends to Colman Dock, the logical state highway extension to Bainbridge Island and SR 305.

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**From:** Paananen, Ron  
**Sent:** Wed 2/11/2009 10:00 PM  
**To:** Dye, Dave  
**Subject:** RE: Seattle Times - Opinion from Rep. Geoff Simpson

I thought the folio with agency responsibility covered this issue. It clearly shows the tunnel cost and overall state responsibility (\$2.8 billion state plus \$300 million from the Port equals \$3.1 billion to get the tunnel done, viaduct demolished, Alaskan Way restored and connected to Elliot / Western. Most of the one pagers are done. I used them today with Rep. Cody. The big question is, what is the SR99 "Tunnel Project"? Is it the same as the Viaduct Replacement Program?

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**From:** Dye, Dave  
**Sent:** Wed 2/11/2009 9:49 PM  
**To:** White, John; Van Ness, Kristy (Consultant); Paananen, Ron; Greco, Theresa; Preedy, Matt; Tobin, Victoria; Brown, Lloyd  
**Cc:** Grotefendt, Amy (Consultant); Lenz, KaDeena (Consultant)  
**Subject:** Re: Seattle Times - Opinion from Rep. Geoff Simpson

John - agreed - add one more 1-pager to the list - speaking of which, a master list with the status of when each is due is needed - we're getting clobbered without the "successful tunnels of the world" piece...really need these by next week when senate heats up...

-dave

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**From:** White, John  
**To:** Van Ness, Kristy (Consultant); Paananen, Ron; Greco, Theresa; Preedy, Matt; Dye, Dave; Tobin, Victoria; Brown, Lloyd  
**Cc:** Grotefendt, Amy (Consultant); Lenz, KaDeena (Consultant)  
**Sent:** Wed Feb 11 21:11:20 2009  
**Subject:** Re: Seattle Times - Opinion from Rep. Geoff Simpson

Seems to me like we need a more concerted effort to correct or counter the misinformation (some intention, some not) with facts. There have been a number of prominent \$4B tunnel statements in the media the past week or two, when the reality is that the tunnel is a fraction of that number.

Are we following up on each of these and providing clarification of the true cost breakdowns? Maybe we should have a short program cost summary that breaks down the primary components of the \$2.8B more succinctly than the financial responsibility table. We could attach the 1-pager that breaks down the tunnel program cost as well, that highlights what the anticipated contract cost vs the program add-ons including risk/contingency.

Sorry for preaching to the choir, but the truth is being spun more and more.

John

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**From:** Van Ness, Kristy (Consultant)  
**To:** Paananen, Ron; White, John; Greco, Theresa; Preedy, Matt; Dye, Dave; Tobin, Victoria; Brown, Lloyd  
**Cc:** Grotefendt, Amy (Consultant); Lenz, KaDeena (Consultant)  
**Sent:** Wed Feb 11 17:27:40 2009  
**Subject:** Seattle Times - Opinion from Rep. Geoff Simpson

[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/opinion/2008734460\\_opinc12simpson.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/opinion/2008734460_opinc12simpson.html)

## Paying and paying again for an Alaskan Way tunnel

The dire state of Washington's economy on its own should sink the luxury solution — a deep-bored tunnel — to replacing the Alaskan Way Viaduct, argues state Rep. Geoff Simpson, D-Covington. He argues that Seattle and King County residents will be paying in many ways for an expensive plan when less expensive and effective solutions exist.

By [Geoff Simpson](#)

Special to The Times

CATAclysmic economic meltdown. Tens of thousands of newly unemployed people every day. Funding cuts for schools, nursing homes and children's health care. A disintegrating safety net for our most vulnerable members of society. Hundreds of critical transportation projects and no way to pay for them. Considering the reality of what we are facing in these economic times, why would we want to write a check to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct with the most expensive, most risky, least studied and slowest-to-construct option?

Maybe \$4.24 billion dollars isn't a lot to some people, but to me, that's a lot of cash.

When so many of our neighbors at Microsoft, Boeing, Starbucks and other companies are losing their jobs every day, all I can think of is how these families are struggling to pay for housing, food, health care and college.

Now, more than ever, is not the time to be extravagant with taxpayer's money.

We don't need a tunnel because there is another option that is faster, cheaper and less risky. Replacing the viaduct with the surface/transit proposal is the best available option because it is financially responsible, better for the environment and leaves our options open for the future. It removes the dangerous viaduct earlier and we could still build a tunnel or another elevated roadway. And it will carry enough traffic to get by for several years.

In 2007, voters were asked if they wanted a tunnel and they soundly rejected the idea. I'm not talking about a handful of citizens or a hand-picked group of big shots in the Chamber of Commerce that have a lot more access

to politicians than ordinary citizens do. Every Seattle citizen was asked and their answer was, "No!" They weren't wishy-washy about it either. It was a resounding rejection, with 70 percent of people voting against it.

The scariest part of this scheme is that \$4.24 billion may be a lowball amount for this luxury option because we do not have enough facts. Washington state Department of Transportation's own project-estimating manual says that at this level of design, it's typical to have the project ultimately cost as much as 200 percent more than current estimates. That would put the total cost at \$12.72 billion.

As a member of the House Transportation Committee, I think it's reckless to put taxpayers on the hook for more than \$4 billion dollars when we have only 1 percent of the answers we need to make a responsible decision.

The other problem with the tunnel scheme is who would have to pay for it. And pay for it. And pay for it again.

Residents of King County would pay the state gas tax each time they fill up their tank and about \$200 or more for car tabs each year. Then, the taxpayers in the Port of Seattle's district — which again is everyone in King County — will be on the hook for another \$300 million from property taxes. Through the shell game of tax-increment financing and other city taxes, Seattle's citizens alone will shoulder nearly a billion dollars. And finally, if the state Senate transportation chair has her way, we'd each have to pay a toll to drive in the new tunnel.

Over in Eastern Washington and other parts of the state, the state actually pays for state highways. What confuses me is why local taxpayers should be taxed time after time to pay for infrastructure that is vital to the entire state's economy. State highway projects anywhere else in the state would be paid for with state funds, not local taxes.

We've all seen this movie before too many times. In the beginning, all the politicians and experts tell you the tunnel will be great, it won't cost more than \$4.24 billion, tops, and it'll get finished on time. No problem.

By the time the lights come back on and the credits roll, your wallet is lighter by three or four times the original amount, the tunnel is finished a couple years late and it leaks.

It's time for doses of reality and common sense.

It's time King County citizens to say no and make sure politicians listen this time.

*Rep. Geoff Simpson, D-Covington, is a professional firefighter, member of the House Transportation Committee and chairman of the Local Government and Housing Committee.*