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Washington State
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King County



City of Seattle

Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program News

This program is led by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), King County, and the City of Seattle.

April 2009

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- Building demolition planned near stadiums.
- Work continues on SR 519 - major lane closures in progress.
- Questions from you: What changes will be made to downtown's waterfront after the bored tunnel is constructed?

Crews find small amount of settlement during viaduct's semiannual inspection

WSDOT crews closed the viaduct on March 21-22 to complete the structure's semiannual inspection. We keep a close eye on the viaduct by visually inspecting it every three months and conducting full inspections every six months to measure any new damage or movement.

Results from the latest inspection showed approximately ¼ inch of new settlement near Seneca Street, bringing total settlement in this area to 1-5/8 inches since the Nisqually earthquake in 2001. No structural damage or new cracks were found. We also inspected safety systems in the Battery Street Tunnel, and successfully tested the tunnel's fire detection and suppression systems. All sprinklers in the tunnel are functioning properly, and only a few of the heat detection devices need repairs.

In April 2008, [four column foundations](#) between Columbia Street and Yesler Way were strengthened after the columns had settled approximately 5-1/2 inches since the 2001 Nisqually earthquake. One year later, the columns are more stable, and WSDOT inspectors detected no new settlement in this area. However, this was only a temporary repair to prevent further damage of this section before we begin to remove the central section. The viaduct is still seismically vulnerable and must be replaced.

For more information about the viaduct's inspection results, visit our [Web site](#). Photos of the inspection can be found on WSDOT's [Flickr site](#).

Building demolition planned near stadiums

Two large buildings near the stadiums will be demolished later this month in preparation for a series of construction projects that will replace the earthquake-damaged Alaskan Way Viaduct.

During the week of April 27, we will begin demolishing a 40,000-square-foot warehouse and 10,000-square-foot

office building on the [Washington-Oregon Shipping Cooperative Association \(WOSCA\) property](#). WSDOT acquired this property to serve as a staging area for viaduct-related construction. The buildings on the site have been vacated by all tenants. Demolition is expected to last through June.

Private parking on this property was previously restricted due to the [Electrical Line Relocation Project](#), which removed the majority of private pay parking spaces in lots just east of the viaduct between S. Atlantic Street and Railroad Way S. The remaining private pay parking spaces on the WOSCA property will be closed for the duration of the demolition project. Sports fans should plan on many of these spaces remaining unavailable for the duration of the sports seasons.

No traffic lanes or street parking will be closed as a result of the demolition project, but truck traffic will increase near the site.

More information about this work is available on our [Web site](#).

Work continues on SR 519 - major lane closures in progress

Crews opened new through- and turn-lanes at the First Avenue S. and S. Atlantic Street intersection on March 28. This work is part of the [SR 519 Intermodal Access Project](#), which will build a new I-90 off-ramp near the stadiums and a bridge over the railroad tracks on S. Royal Brougham Way.

SR 519, known to most people as S. Atlantic Street (Edgar Martinez Drive S.), is an important thoroughfare for cars, trucks and pedestrians in Seattle's SODO district. Its proximity to the [S. Holgate Street to S. King Street Viaduct Replacement Project](#) makes its completion critical to keeping people and goods moving during viaduct construction. The SR 519 corridor is used by freight and ferry traffic to access the waterfront, by vehicles and pedestrians to reach the stadiums, and by commuters to travel through SODO.

To complete this project, crews will continue partial and full closures on S. Royal Brougham Way until spring 2010. One lane will remain open in each direction for major events at the stadiums, but drivers should allow extra time when traveling to events. Closures on Fourth Avenue S. near S. Royal Brougham Way will begin in May. In addition, Third Avenue S. will be fully closed from S. Royal Brougham Way to Edgar Martinez Drive S. until spring 2010. For more information about SR 519 construction, visit the project's [Web site](#).

Questions from you

We have received a number of questions and comments from you regarding the [bored tunnel hybrid alternative](#). Each month we feature one of those questions in this news update.

Our April question from you is: What changes will be made to downtown's waterfront after the bored tunnel is constructed?

The bored tunnel alternative includes a new promenade along Seattle's downtown waterfront, which presents the opportunity to create a world-class public space for residents and visitors.

Once the viaduct is removed, we will build a new Alaskan Way boulevard, east of its current location that will sit in the viaduct's footprint and will be much more efficient than the current street. It will have four lanes (two in each direction) plus turn lanes between Pike Street and Columbia Street. South of Columbia Street, the boulevard will expand to six lanes. All intersections will be signalized, and signals will be timed to move traffic efficiently. In addition, signalized pedestrian crossings will ensure safe pedestrian access to the waterfront.

The new waterfront will be a welcoming front door to the city and will reconnect Seattle's downtown to the waterfront. The new promenade width will be increased from approximately 20 feet today to 70-80 feet when the viaduct is removed. The new space will be an improved environment and a place for people to play and work without the noise, shadows and dust from the viaduct.

More information about the bored tunnel hybrid alternative can be found on our [Web site](#).

About these updates

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