VandenBerghe, Alissa (Consultant)

From:	Williamson, Alec
Sent:	Friday, February 27, 2009 3:54 PM
To:	White, John
Cc:	Preedy, Matt; Greco, Theresa; Grotefendt, Amy (Consultant); Clark, Gordon T. (Consultant); Conte, Rick (Consultant); Rigsby, Mike (Consultant)
Subject:	RE: AWV - Constituent Correspondence

Attachments: 147202.pdf

John- Here is some text for you to work with on the tunnel shoulder width constituent letter. Please let me know if this works or if you need additional help on this.

Alec

Dear Mr. Brown,

Thank you for your inquiry related to the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement. The state governor, Mayor of Seattle, and King County Executive recently recommended to their respective legislative bodies that the viaduct be replaced with a bored tunnel under downtown Seattle. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is now beginning preliminary work to support an environmental impact statement for viaduct replacement, although it is still unclear what action the state legislature will take regarding this project.

In your letter you raise several questions regarding design standards within the tunnel. You reference the WSDOT Design Manual and state that in your opinion such a design would not be safe and would increase tort liability risk to the state of Washington.

Let me start by saying that WSDOT takes safety and tort liability very seriously. WSDOT must comply with applicable design standards, or justify any deviations to applicable standards for all projects that make substantial changes to the alignment or configuration of a highway. Tunnels are not specifically referenced in the WSDOT Design Manual, therefore the project team is required to work with WSDOT Headquarters Design to develop a set of project specific standards applicable to this section of roadway based on the corridor characteristics, route continuity, and any other unique aspects. The standards you reference are a starting point, but certain modifications are likely to be made to the standards for this project given the unique aspects of the SR 99 corridor through downtown Seattle. The geometric design standards are in the process of being developed for this project over the next few months.

Many different design manuals are considered when setting design criteria for tunnels, including the WSDOT *Design Manual*, American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*, National Fire Protection Association Publication 502, *Standard for Road Tunnels, Bridges, and Other Limited Access Highways*, and the AASHTO publication, *A Policy on Design Standards Interstate System* are some of the publications that our designers reference in seeking approval of the design. All of these publications recognize the high cost of tunneling and afford the opportunity to reduce shoulders where appropriate provided that shy distance to walls and a separated safety walkway are provided. In the case of the current tunnel proposal, a separated walkway is provided outside of the roadway area, and breakdown shoulders are provided on the right hand side of the roadway.

WSDOT requires that every project document each non-standard design element and obtain approval from the appropriate jurisdiction prior to construction in the form of a design file. The design file is retained and archived to provide a record of decision making in the event of future litigation that involves WSDOT. The Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement project is no different- it will go through a process of documentation of all non-standard elements and follow an established justification and request for approval process that will involve WSDOT Headquarters and the Federal Highway Administration. In addition to meeting these requirements, the design team will also need to

coordinate closely with the Seattle Fire Department (SFD), which will have emergency response jurisdiction in this facility, to insure that safety features and systems are adequate. Ultimately the approval of a certificate of occupancy by the SFD will be required prior to opening the tunnel facility.

Please be assured that the design approval process will be followed, reviewed, approved and documented prior to project implementation. Thanks again for your interest in the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement program.

Sincerely,

From: White, John
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 8:22 AM
To: Williamson, Alec; Rigsby, Mike (Consultant)
Cc: Preedy, Matt; Greco, Theresa; Grotefendt, Amy (Consultant)
Subject: FW: AWV - Constituent Correspondence

Alec,

Can you take the lead in a draft response to the specific points made in this letter to the Gov/AGO/FHWA regarding the tunnel. The write, a P.E., tries to make the point that the tunnel as shown in our graphics is of substandard design, and that a tunnel designed to a 'proper standard' would require two bores at much greater cost. We need to do a couple things here: explain our Design Manual and design guidance vs absolutes, talk about the design speed and how that factors into decision-making, and probably reference AASHTO/FHWA and any relevant info from the new tunnel design manual (PB should be able to help with this part). Clearly this is someone who is interpreting our design manual in a way that suits their specific interests, as they quote a likely $8B tunnel cost.

We need a draft no later than Monday so that we can fine tune it and get it back to the AGO.

Thanks,

John

From: Brown, Bryce (ATG) [mailto:BryceB@ATG.WA.GOV]
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 7:02 AM
To: White, John; Greco, Theresa
Cc: Brown, Bryce; Galvin, Daniel
Subject: AWV - Constituent Correspondence

Enclosed is a constituent correspondence sent to the AGO by Chris Brown, P.E. I am requesting assistance from your office in providing a response. If you have existing narrative on the issue, that would be a great resource. I have about 10 days to send out the response. Thank you.

<<147202.pdf>>

```
*** eSafe1 scanned this email for malicious content ***
*** IMPORTANT: Do not open attachments from unrecognized senders ***
```