

West Seattle Transportation Coalition

Meeting Minutes for September 27, 2018

In attendance:

Board-Victoria Nelson, Marty Westerman, Mark Jacobs, Kate Wells, Deb Barker

Guests-Meghan Kennish, Amanda Kay, Milton Horst, Gertrude Horst, Allen Chen, Joyce Allen, Susan Fairo, Jun Pitre (SDOT), Brian Nielson (WSDOT), Heather Marx, Chris Arkills, Jay Choe, Jasmine Beverly (WSDOT), Jordan Sanabria (WSDOT), Julia Bautista Salinas

1. Meeting called to order at approximately 6:30pm
2. No minutes to approve
3. Presentation on upcoming Alaskan Way Viaduct closure and tunnel opening featuring Heather Marx from SDOT, Brian Nielson, Jasmine Beverly and Jordan Sanabria from WSDOT and Chris Arkills from Metro

Heather Marx spoke first about the upcoming “Period of Maximum Constraint” and its effects on traffic. The Viaduct removal/tunnel opening, loss of light rail tunnel to buses, light rail construction and Convention Center construction will all result in increased traffic for a number of years. At the end of this period we will see a renewed downtown with a beautified Pike/Pine corridor, remodeled Key Arena and a waterfront park.

The city is planning 5 pillars to handle the increased traffic difficulties - system monitoring, transit investment, reduction of SOV use, public right of way (minimizing construction closures) and regional communication.

Brian Nielson continued the presentation more specifically about the shift from Viaduct to tunnel and the steps involved:

- 1-Complete tunnel (finished, now undergoing systems testing)
- 2-Move Alaskan Way from under viaduct (Oct.)
- 3-Close Viaduct (Jan.)
- 4-Complete connections
- 5-Open tunnel

The Viaduct shutdown will begin on approximately Jan. 4 with the closure of stadium area exits. Complete shutdown will begin on Jan. 11. The tunnel will open to cars after 3 weeks, although it will be approximately 2 more weeks before cars can use northbound SR99 to access downtown.

The many agencies involved are planning increased communication and coordination through the process. Incident response, signal timing, police assistance, increased Water Taxi runs, standby Metro coaches in West Seattle, and low bridge/traffic status text services are some of the strategies that will be used.

The city encourages travelers to expect and plan for delays, and encourage everyone to take transit, bike or walk, car or vanpool, and shift work hours to help reduce rush hour delays. Commute Seattle (commuteseattle.com) will offer concierge services to aid travelers. The city and other agencies involved understand that “rush hour” will be longer than it is currently.

Chris Arkills spoke about what Metro is doing to keep transit users moving. In the initial viaduct closure period, most West Seattle buses (those that normally use the viaduct) will use the 4th Avenue exit from the WS Bridge then shift over to the Busway heading northbound. One lane of the exit will be made into a bus lane. Southbound, the buses will take Edgar

Martinez Way to 1st Ave. or, if traffic warrants, East Marginal Way. East Marginal is not an option northbound due to freight traffic. No stops will be added in SODO in order to lessen travel time.

An extra Water Taxi vessel will be added, with extra shuttle service from the Admiral and Alaska Junctions. No additional shuttle routes are under consideration. Vanpool parking will be available in the Don Armeni boat launch lot and extra car parking will be provided at Pier 2, as well as lifted time restrictions on street parking. Extra bike parking is also planned.

Rapid Ride C sometimes employs skip stopping to speed up buses and may employ this more often during the closure.

5 or so weeks after the viaduct closes the bus routes will shift again. There will be a new exit in the vicinity of the stadiums that will allow buses to bypass most of SODO and access downtown via Alaskan Way.

Brian Nielson tied up the discussion with a few additional points. There are plans in the works for bike and pedestrian events on the viaduct and in the tunnel before the tunnel opens. The viaduct demolition is expected to take 6 months and will happen in sections, preserving as much connection between waterfront and downtown as possible. The Battery Street tunnel filling will take approximately 24 months and the final Alaskan Way construction is due in 2020.

4. Steven Mak from Sound Transit recapped the latest developments in the West Seattle route selection process. The Stakeholders Advisory Group had just made recommendations for which route options to push to the next level of analysis. The SAG chose the Puget Ridge Tunnel and Golf Course Tunnel for further study, along with the Representative Alignment.

5. All were invited to the Feet First ST station walk on October 16 at 4:30pm.

6. Meeting adjourned

Minutes compiled by Kate Wells.