

## Seattle Freight Mobility Action Committee (FMAC) Meeting Notes

June 16, 2009

Manufacturing Industrial Council (MIC) Offices: 5509 1<sup>st</sup> Ave S. Ste B, Seattle, WA

### Meeting Notes

### Attendance

#### Committee Members

Pat Binion, Co-Chair (Columbia Distributing)

Cliff Bates (V. Van Dyke Inc.)

Warren Aakervik (Ballard Oil)

Ed Shilley (NUCOR Steel)

Christine Wolf (Port of Seattle)

Peter Whitehead, Co-Chair (Nelson Trucking)

Greg Blaine (Continental VanLines)

Terry Finn (BNSF Railway)

Kim Suelzle (CityIce)

#### Other attendees:

Suzie Burke, NSIA

SDOT: Lawrence Eichhorn, Ron Borowski, Danté Taylor, Sara Robertson, Tony Mazzella, Steve Pearce, Trevor Partap, Mike Johnson, Art Brochet

WSDOT: John White, Chad Schuster

Port of Seattle: Dan Burke

MIC: Dave Gering, Marilyn Young Skogland

Tom Noguchi, Fehr & Peers

#### Agenda Items/Discussion Topics/Member Recommendations

1. **Past Meeting:** The Committee approved the May 19, 2009 meeting notes as submitted after further discussion of the Draft Pedestrian Master Plan (PMP). Mr. Binion noted that FMAC CO-Chair Peter Whitehead was preparing FMAC comments on the PMP.

The Committee discussed their interests on the Draft PMP in more detail, based on the presentation SDOT made at the May meeting. Mr. Aakervik requested that FMAC should be provided the opportunity to review the list of improvements proposed on Major Truck Streets. Mr. Aakervik further requested: 1) that the Committee should be advised on the process SDOT intends to implement to revise the Draft PMP to respond to freight comments, 2) The FMAC should see the revisions, and 3) the FMAC should be advised of the decision dates for the Plan. SDOT subsequently provided the requested information to the Committee for review and comment, along with more detailed information on the Draft PMP regarding proposed improvements on arterials, including those in the manufacturing and industrial centers.

## **2. Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall South Segment Update – John White, WSDOT & Steve Pearce, SDOT**

- The Port of Seattle is considering participating in the project funding plan with \$300 M.
- Bored tunnel to be completed by 2015.
- Over dimensional truck needs have been taken into consideration.
- There will be dedicated two-way truck access to BNSF North Seattle International Gateway (SIG) intermodal yard.
- Combustible cargo trucks can use the Central Waterfront route or I-5.

### **Issues and Questions raised by Committee:**

- Connection between Alaskan Way and East Marginal Way is still a big issue
- Christine Wolf: Take a close look at access to Terminal 30 in the traffic analysis; what numbers do you have?
  - **John White: Offered to meet with her and others interested in this analysis**
- Warren Aakervik: North Portal – left turns are better for freight than right turns
- Ed Shilley: what is grade for fly-over? Answer 5%.
- Warren Aakervik: Is movement of people and goods a goal? If so, it is not listed; seems other goals are mentioned more
- Do we have a location in the city/state that uses the same signal technology as the technology we will use for the Central Waterfront area?
  - **Steve Pearce: Not sure, but will confirm with Committee**
- Warren Aakervik: Is there any plan to improve traffic flow on Denny between Battery St and Western? Needs follow-up.
- Where is the failure point identified in the Viaduct traffic analysis?
  - **Steve Pearce: Off ramps are being used by drivers from all over the city**
  - Warren Aakervik: Why would people from Capitol Hill and other places use the tunnel when they do not currently travel that far north?
    - **Steve Pearce: They would use the tunnel because otherwise, they would have to pass up the tunnel entrance to get to the Central Waterfront surface streets**
- **Request:** Pat Binion asked the team to return in late summer or early fall to revisit the status of the project.

## **3. Spokane Street Viaduct Construction and Detours – Art Brochet, SDOT**

**Note:** Unfortunately a software issue occurred and FMAC was not shown the intended detour routes and other presentational information. Mr. Brochet proceeded to give the presentation without visual aids. There were no handouts prepared for the meeting. SDOT subsequently sent the Committee a copy of the Spokane St Viaduct presentation materials for their review and comment.

- Detours of 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues will end in July 2009
- Off- ramp from upper viaduct to lower roadway will remain open

- 1<sup>st</sup> Ave S Project is 2/3 completed; entirely paved except for Lander; sidewalks are in progress

**Issues and Questions raised by Committee:**

- Are there a high number of trucks turning into construction on S. Horton St.?
- Contractor's utility trucks are not staying within their travel lanes yet container trucks are staying within their lanes
- Will buses trying to access bus route be detoured?
  - **Art Brochet: It is possible; detour route is north on 6<sup>th</sup> Ave S to Lander**
- What will influence the final decision on the 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S off ramp alternatives?
  - **Art Brochet: Currently looking at transit and HOV lane options for the off-ramp (there are currently 2 lanes until you reach the bottom, then it becomes three lanes: one going left only, one going right with an option to go straight, and one going right only)**
    - There is no transit route that would use this off ramp in the future

**Request/Follow-Up:** How will SDOT accommodate trucks on these ramp lanes? Can HOV lanes be used by trucks?

- Have you looked at the effects of Light Rail traffic demand in the area?
  - **Art Brochet: There are not any specific accommodations for Light Rail but we are open to suggestions**
- Art Brochet: Willing to come back to a future meeting to share more detour route information
- **Request:** FMAC asked that they have an opportunity to see and review the detour plans. The plans should also be sent out to the truckers List serve.

**4. South Holgate Street (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Aves S) Rail Corridor Study – Tony Mazzella, SDOT and Tom Noguchi, Fehr & Peers**

- Main question on this project is following Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement “should Holgate be partially or fully closed to best respond to conflicts between railroad operations and all traffic modes?”
- The number of trains crossing Holgate has remained constant from 2004 to 2008, but some trains have gotten longer (8,000’); vehicle traffic has also been stable at around 12,000 vehicles per day (VPD)
- Currently, railroad gates are down for about 5 hours per day due to train operations
- Project team used week-long video monitoring of Holgate to understand actual operations involving trains and traffic.
- Trucks comprise 25% of all vehicle traffic on Holgate
- Holgate is important for Beacon Hill access to industrial area
- Project team concluded Holgate too critical to roadway network to close (for all modes particularly pedestrians and business-related traffic)
- Safety improvements are still warranted (e.g. guard gates, median, sidewalk)
- Nothing will happen to Holgate until after the Viaduct is replaced.

- Consultant recommendation to SDOT is to keep Holgate open to traffic and make safety improvements (sidewalks, median and quad gates).

**Issues and Questions raised by Committee:**

- If there are not any safety problems, why install safety enhancements?
  - **Tony Mazzella: Safety enhancements will address potential hazards**
- **Suzie Burke:** medians are awful and the plan for trees is flawed- there should be no trees.
- **FMAC Recommendation:** Trees/vegetation on major truck streets causes a visibility problem and cover signs; medians make truck U-turns difficult. Avoid vegetation and a median.
- Tom Noguchi: Holgate right of way is wide enough for new design to allow large vehicles to make U-turns
- For further information please contact Tony Mazzella at 206-684-0811 or [tony.mazzella@seattle.gov](mailto:tony.mazzella@seattle.gov)
- FMAC had no comment on the consultant recommendation to keep Holgate open.

**General Updates: None**

**Formal Committee Recommendations: None**

**Handouts:**

WSDOT Handouts on Alaskan Way Viaduct

- Bored tunnel funding brochure
- Tunnel experience brochure
- Project timeline
- Program Map

SDOT Contact Information: [sdotfreight@seattle.gov](mailto:sdotfreight@seattle.gov)

FMAC Approved 6/16/09 Notes on - Date: 8/18/09

DT/SDOT  
8/20/09