



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

December 20, 2007

**Seattle
Design
Commission**

Greg Nickels
Mayor

Karen Kiest
Chair

Tasha Atchison

Brendan Connolly

John Hoffman

Mary Johnston

Juanita LaFond

Dennis Ryan

Norie Sato

Darrell Vange

Darby Watson

Guillermo Romano
Executive Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Projects Reviewed

Viaduct South/South Holgate to South King
Terry/Boren Block 103 Partial Alley Vacation
Lake Union Trail

Commissioners Present

Karen Kiest, Chair
Tasha Atchison
Brendan Connolly
Mary Johnston
Juanita LaFond
Dennis Ryan
Norie Sato
Darrell Vange
Darby Watson

Convened: 8:30am
Adjourned: 2:30pm

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Valerie Kinast
Tom Iurino
Vivian Chang



**Department of Planning
and Development**
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
PO Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-2000

T: 206-615-1349
F: 206-233-7883

printed on recycled paper

20 December 2007 Project: Viaduct South/South Holgate to South King Street Viaduct Replacement Project

Phase: Schematic Design

Last Reviews: October 4, 2007

Presenters: Ali Amiri, WSDOT

Mike Johnson, SDOT

John Fenedick, Parsons Brinkerhoff

Boris Dramov, Roma Design Group

Attendees: Yu-Wen Huang, Roma Design Group

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. 169/RS0609)

Action:

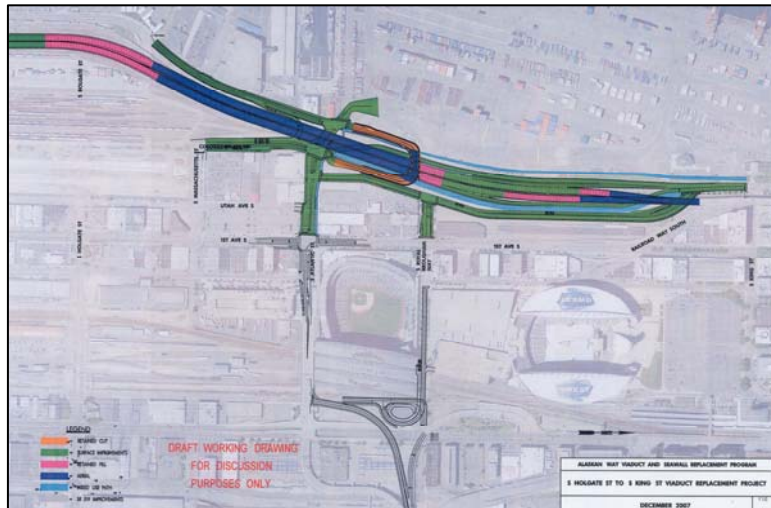
The Commission thanks the team for their presentation and approves schematic design of the Viaduct South Replacement Project with the following comments:

- **Appreciate the delicate balance of the many variables and modes of transit reflected in this design**
- **Applaud the emphasis on interpreting thoughtful urban design concepts and creating detailing for pedestrian and bike movement in the north-south and east west directions. Agree that the alignment of the multi-use trail along the east side is appropriate for bicycle safety, and suggest there can and will be synergies with the ferry-waiting area. Encourage as many small steps as possible to make this a human area that is knit to the downtown fabric.**
- **Urge further pursuit of a westerly alignment for the mixed used trail to the west edge of the project, even is constrained for this segment. Encourage further discussion with the port to achieve better solutions to merge**
- **Increase connectivity to 1st Ave; consider private development potential along 1st at stadiums and how this project ties to it.**
- **Appreciate the new mixed used trail segment to the east of SR-99 north of Atlantic**
- **Would like to see a concept diagram that explains how this project would tie to the potential surface waterfront option, beyond just the existing elevated connection**
- **Urge careful consideration of the directional signage will be, as this will have a significant impact on the experience**
- **Stress the need for coordination of urban design and design linkages between this project and other major corridor projects on the south end so there is a connective identity**
- **Consider potential for artwork early in project design**
- **Look forward to further refinement in the connectivity and flow of this project, and development of urban design elements and details.**

Proponent's Presentation

Project Background

This is a \$550 million project, which removes and replaces approximately 40% or one mile of the existing Viaduct between South Holgate Street and South King Street to address seismic vulnerability and public safety issues. This section of SR 99 will be rebuilt with three travel lanes in each direction, much like the existing viaduct, but it will have wider shoulders for improved safety. This project will also improve local mobility and improve access to downtown Seattle for pedestrians, vehicles, and freight. Construction is expected to last over three years, between 2009 and 2012. The team is currently in the 30% design phase, which will define the type, size, and location of roadway, roadside, and streetscape features in January 2008. A design-bid-build contracting method will be used. Approximately six adjacent properties will be affected by the project and traffic will be maintained during construction. At the time of our previous briefing the urban design was lagging, however, on a holistic perspective, the team is now integrating urban design with the design and engineering efforts.



South Holgate Street to South King Street Viaduct Replacement Project

In October, the Commission had made suggestions regarding bridge aesthetics and the functional pedestrian pathways as they pertain to North and South Alaskan way, the Mountains to Sound Greenway, and the use of the by-pass undercrossing (U-tube) as an alternate route when the BNSF rail track closes South Atlantic Street. Urban design consideration for the pathway on Atlantic is especially important due to the number of conflict points and the complicated nature of the surroundings. In terms of urban design, Roma Design Group will helm the urban design work for the South End project. Boris Dramov, a principal at Roma, is leading the effort. The project team has worked intensively with Roma to integrate urban design principals into the overall concept. Although the concept is essentially the same, there have been many subtle detail changes. The most dramatic change is along the eastern side of corridor, which will now include a mixed use path. The roadway layout has been rearranged to provide space for the mixed use path on the east side of the mainline. The urban designer utilizes up to 35 feet of space for this new pathway from Atlantic northward to the northern limit of the project at the vicinity of King Street. Some other changes include adjustments to the U-tube, which has pushed the west leg to maximize space for the other north-south mixed use path to South King Street. Also, negotiation with the Port of Seattle is needed to improve the safety of the mixed-use path for bikes and pedestrians traveling through the busy freight entrance to Terminal 46. The Mountains to Sound trail includes a sidewalk on the west side of East Marginal Way and bike lanes on either side of East Marginal Way. From an urban design aspect, there are desires to reduce the size of the SR 99 bridge. The ferry holding area is located on the western side of the northbound Alaskan Way frontage road to separate the frontage road from the easterly multi use path. South Royal Brougham Way will form a T intersection with northbound Alaskan Way frontage road.

Due to anticipated large truck volumes the U-tube profile grade will need to be in the range of 5% to 7%.

Commissioners' Comments

- Building the U-tube to accommodate the tail track seems like a lot of work for a single use facility. Is there any talk of connecting the U-tube to other potential facilities that will serve functions other than freight?
 - The U-tube, as planned, will be open to the general public and also has an 8-foot sidewalk for pedestrian use.
- What is the intent of the mainline structure?
 - The intent of the mainline structure is to cross over the BNSF track. To the south the structure has been designed to accommodate freeway speeds, which was done to ensure that the project is “alternative neutral.”
- Are there carpool lanes?
 - There are currently three lanes in each direction open to general purpose traffic, matching the existing AWV. Future lane designations must tie into the central waterfront solution.
- What urban design principles does Roma have?
 - There are ten urban design principles, which include compatibility, humanizing elements, art and landscape, gateway to the city, clean elegant contemporary design, issues of vagrancy and negative space, among others
- How does the structure affect development?
 - There will be additional emphasis and stress on South Atlantic Street.
- What linkages do bikes and pedestrians have?
 - There are linkages in north-south and east-west directions.
- How does the team plan to minimize lost space or spaces that are not meaningful?
 - The mixed-use paths lie within greenway corridors that are adaptable and flexible, which lend themselves to providing redundant and sustainable urban forms. It is also difficult to reconcile intersecting and conflicting expectations due to political lag time and the rapid schedule for this project.
- Concerned about the north side separation that will not allow east-west linkages.
 - The east side corridor addresses this concern by allowing access from the trail to developments east of the northbound Alaskan Way frontage road.
- How resistant is the Port in terms of providing more space?
 - The Port is generally positive about this project and understands that the project must acquire some of their real estate. The Port’s northerly access point at King Street is problematic.
- What is the eastern link for pedestrian paths?
 - The Mountains to Sound Greenway along the north side of Atlantic Street provides the east/west linkages.
- What is the at-grade situation of SR 99 trail?
 - In part sandwiched between roadways
- Humanizing aspects should be developed and tailored to suit the specific needs of this corridor.
- See urban redevelopment potential.