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State of Washington

King County

City of Seattle

## The Alaskan Way Viaduct Collaborative Process

King County Executive Ron Sims, Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels and Governor Christine Gregoire have committed to a collaborative effort that brings together their three administrations – along with interested stakeholders and the legislative bodies – to forge a solution for the Alaskan Way Viaduct. This document outlines the primary elements of this effort, referred to as the Alaskan Way Viaduct Collaborative (Collaborative).

### 1. PURPOSE OF COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

The Collaborative is intended to resolve the longstanding needs of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and related projects in a manner capable of being broadly supported and implemented. The intention is to develop a recommended approach in December 2008 for consideration by the appropriate legislative bodies in 2009.

### 2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Discussions on the Alaskan Way Viaduct to-date have tended to polarize parties across the city, region and state. Debates have accentuated differences and masked important and overlapping interests. Any solution to the Alaskan Way Viaduct is to be grounded in the city, state and county's recognition of, commitment to and integration across a set of six guiding principles. These guiding principles are as follows:

- ***Improve public safety.*** Any solution to the Alaskan Way Viaduct must improve public safety for current Viaduct users and along the central waterfront.
- ***Provide efficient movement of people and goods.*** Any solution to the Alaskan Way Viaduct must optimize the ability to move people and goods in and through Seattle in an efficient manner, including access to port and rail facilities.
- ***Maintain or improve downtown Seattle, regional, the port and state economies.*** Any solution to the Alaskan Way Viaduct must sustain the city, region, port and state's economic vitality.
- ***Enhance Seattle's waterfront as a place for people.*** Any solution to the Alaskan Way Viaduct must augment the Seattle waterfront's reputation as a world-class destination and welcoming front door to the city.

- ***Create solutions that are fiscally responsible.*** Any solution to the Alaskan Way Viaduct must make wise and efficient use of taxpayer dollars. The state's contribution to the project is not to exceed \$2.8 billion in 2012 dollars.
- ***Foster environmentally sound approaches.*** Any solution to the Alaskan Way Viaduct must demonstrate environmental leadership, with a particular emphasis on supporting local, regional, and state climate change initiatives.

Moreover, any solution to an issue as fundamental to the city, region and state as the Alaskan Way Viaduct must be developed through a step-wise process that is open, transparent and informed by ongoing discussions with and feedback from the general public, stakeholders and relevant legislative bodies.

These principles are to serve as the foundation for the Collaborative's work and will underpin its evaluation of different options for replacing the aging Viaduct. Both the public and the legislative bodies will be asked to provide input on these principles early in the Collaborative process.

### 3. SCOPE OF COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

The needs of the Alaskan Way Viaduct are complex and integrated. Solutions in any one area can impact options elsewhere. For this reason, the Collaborative process is structured as a comprehensive approach intended to fold under one umbrella the various projects that constitute a possible integrated solution. It also brings together in a partnership the collective resources and expertise of the three primary government parties. As well, stakeholder and legislative input will be actively sought and integrated at each step of the Collaborative's work through the outreach approach detailed in Sections 7 and 8 of this description.

The specific elements to be included as part of the Collaborative process are summarized below:

- ***Moving Forward Projects.*** In March 2007, Governor Gregoire, County Executive Sims and Mayor Nickels committed to moving forward on a series of key projects that facilitate the timely removal and repair of a substantial portion of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. These early safety and mobility projects, known as the "Moving Forward" projects, include: Bent 93 and 94 repairs; early utility relocations; Battery Street Tunnel improvements; Lenora to Battery Street Tunnel improvements; south end improvements (Holgate to King Street replacement); and transit enhancements and other traffic improvements.
- ***Central Waterfront.*** Core to any discussion of the Alaskan Way Viaduct is a discussion regarding the central waterfront portion. Significant resources will be dedicated to identifying and analyzing possible alternatives to replace the mile-long portion of the Viaduct that moves along the high-profile waterfront section of

downtown Seattle. Specifically, the analysis will examine the potential for various alternatives to meet the project's reframed guiding principles described above. The Collaborative partners will work together to: (1) develop a common set of performance measures, based on the guiding principles, to evaluate different alternatives; (2) foster a consistent, credible and transparent analysis of different options for the downtown portion of the Viaduct; and 3) identify appropriate lead agencies for the various facets of the analysis. (This approach, referred to as the Systems Approach, is described more fully in Section 4 below.)

- ***Emergency Planning and Management.*** The partners are committed to working quickly to find a long-term solution to Alaskan Way Viaduct needs. The parties are also mindful that the state's ongoing safety monitoring program or unexpected developments could impact the viability of the Viaduct before a solution can be formulated and/or implemented. To that end, the Collaborative partners will work closely together to track and implement plans, as needed, to address safety issues, increased transit, Viaduct usage, the Seawall and any other capital and operational improvements that impact the city and region. This includes the development of a fallback plan – including traffic mitigation measures for I-5 and city streets – to ensure the removal of the existing aging and seismically vulnerable Alaskan Way Viaduct no later than 2015.
- ***Programmatic Strategies.*** The Collaborative Process will consider “system” alternatives that incorporate transportation strategies that would be implemented outside the existing SR 99 corridor. Those investments could include:
  1. Street system improvements (examples include the Mercer, Spokane and Lander projects and improvements to the downtown street grid)
  2. Transit system improvements (rail and bus capital investments and additional service hours)
  3. Transportation Demand Management measures
  4. Right-of-way management strategies
  5. Transportation System Management measures (including improved traffic signal systems and variable message signs providing driver information)
  6. Increasing the efficiency of I-5 for through trips

Importantly, the analysis will be structured to ensure that these various elements move ahead in an iterative fashion so as not to constrain the range of possible solutions. For example, the partners will be working together to ensure that early implementation decisions related to the Moving Forward projects do not limit the range of viable alternatives to be considered for the Central Waterfront section.

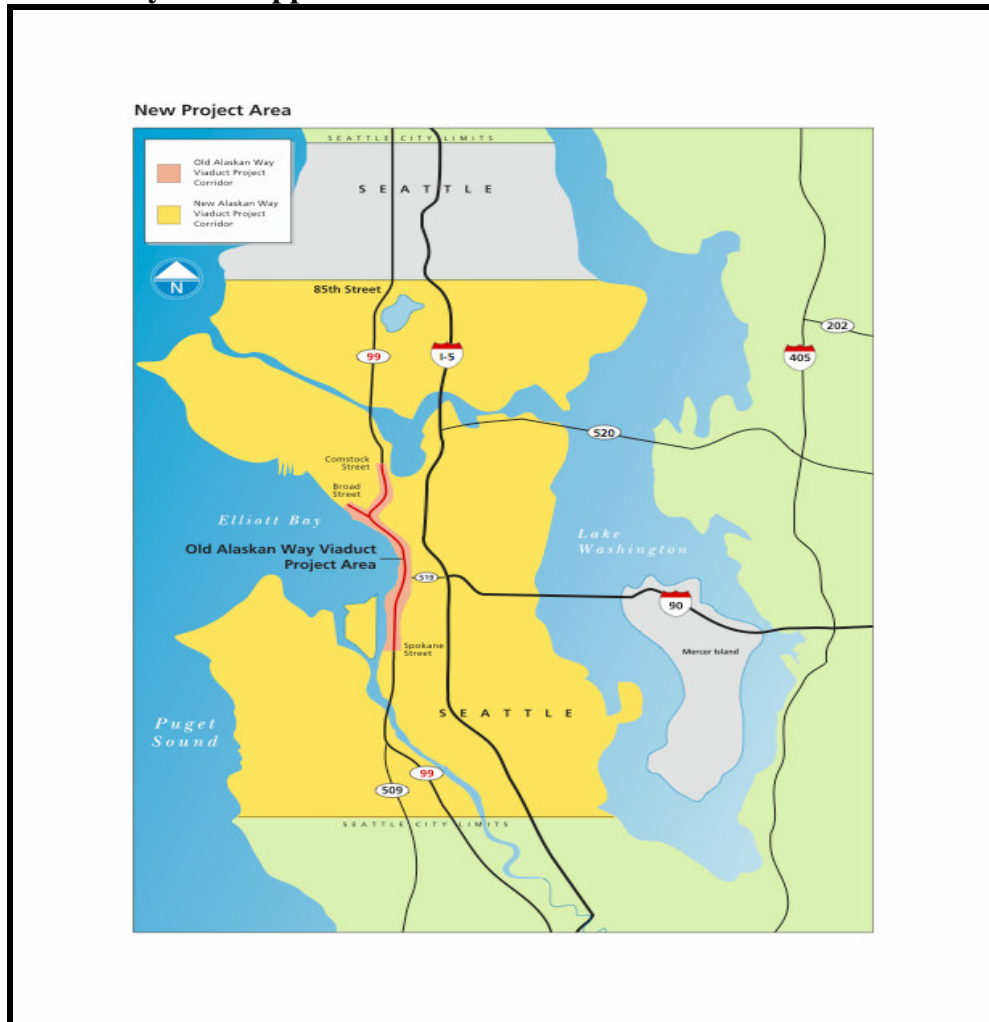
Again, all facets of the Collaborative process will be informed by ongoing dialogue with both the public and the legislative bodies.

#### 4. A NEW WAY FORWARD: THE SYSTEMS APPROACH

Discussions to-date regarding the Alaskan Way Viaduct have focused narrowly on the State Route 99 corridor. This framing has constrained both the available options and opportunities, and left parties with conflicting alternatives for the central waterfront.

In moving forward, the parties are embracing a new strategy – referred to as the Systems Approach – which looks at the region as a whole to identify innovative strategies for moving people and goods in and through Seattle. By broadening the frame – from the limited SR-99 corridor to a wider area more or less bounded by 85<sup>th</sup> to the north, city limits to the south, Elliott Bay to the west and Lake Washington to the east – the parties can explore and implement a range of capital and operating improvements to the city, county and state’s existing transportation network. (See Figure 1 below.) This approach embraces not only SR-99, but also I-5, Seattle’s city streets, public transit and demand management as a possible solution space. It focuses not only roadway enhancements for cars, trucks and buses, but expands the set of potential solutions to include a combination of transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

**Figure 1: The Systems Approach**



*The figure above depicts the approximate solution area for goods and services now moving along the SR-99 corridor. The small pink-colored ribbon along SR-99 represents the previous definition of the solution area for the central waterway portion of the AWV. The larger yellow-colored area represents the new, larger solution area associated with the Systems Approach.*

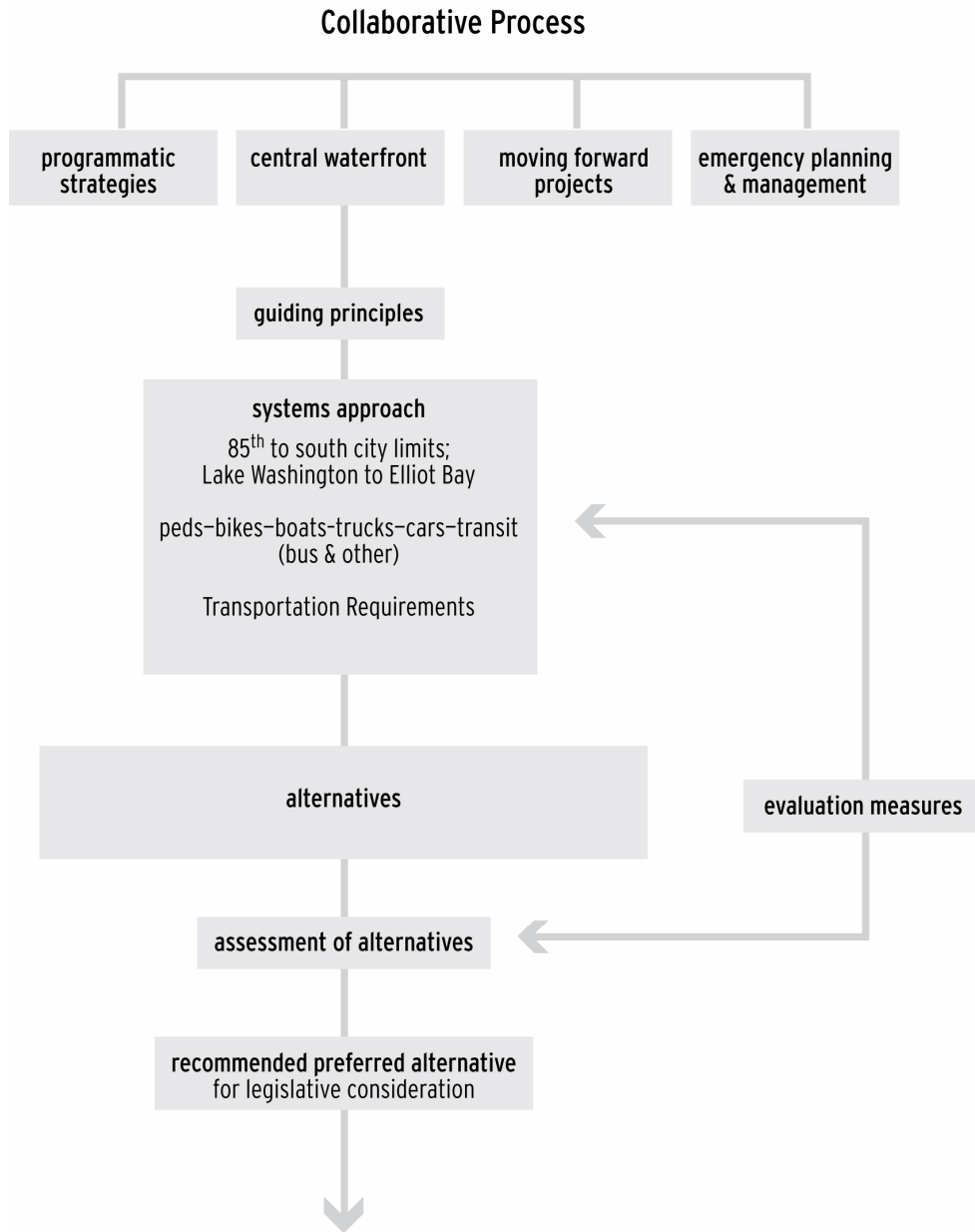
The impact of this shift in approach is dramatic. Rather than searching for a solution that attempts to replace the Viaduct's current vehicle capacity in the same narrow corridor, the Systems Approach looks at the potential for a package of systematic improvements within the broader area to more efficiently move people and goods without unduly impacting the region's already overburdened roads and highways. This has the potential to significantly reduce the demand along the waterfront corridor. It also underscores the imperative for the primary implementation partners – the city, county and state departments of transportation, as well as other transportation providers and users – to coordinate their efforts.

Below is an overview of the steps inherent to a Systems Approach. (This is also presented in Figure 2 below.) Each step will be shaped by ongoing and in-depth discussions with both stakeholders and the relevant legislative bodies.

- ***Step One: Develop Guiding Principles.*** The first step in a Systems Approach is to develop an integrated set of guiding principles. These overarching principles, summarized in Section 2 above, serve as the foundation for the analysis and lead to the development of a common set of evaluation measures. These principles are to be informed by early-on discussion with stakeholders and others.
- ***Step Two: Assess Center City Access and Mobility Needs Using A Systems Approach.*** This step is critical and represents a significant departure from past efforts. In this step, the three Collaborative partners jointly assess the potential for a range of transportation improvements – roadway and transit, pedestrian and bicycle – to meet the demands for moving people and goods. This step embraces an expanded range of possible actions, from increased transit service and dedicated bus/HOV lanes on key arteries, to capacity and operating improvements to the city street network and transportation demand management policies. The net result of this effort will be an understanding of (1) the extent to which the people and goods now using the SR-99 central waterfront corridor can be efficiently shifted to other areas or modes; and (2) the extent to which other design options are needed to handle goods and services unable to be absorbed elsewhere.
- ***Step Three: Draft Performance Measures and Develop Design Options.*** Once the joint analysis characterizes the movement of goods and services not able to be absorbed elsewhere, the Collaborative will shift to the next phase of work: crafting a clear set of evaluation measures and identifying viable alternatives for handling this gap. These steps are inevitably iterative, but the Collaborative will put an emphasis first on developing a preliminary set of performance measures to foster a transparent and credible evaluation process. Below is a brief description of each of these two steps.

- ***Step Three A: Develop Performance Measures.*** An important part of the Systems Approach is a carefully crafted process to assess the potential for different strategies to meet the city, region and state's integrated needs. The key to this step is the drafting of a common set of evaluation measures (both qualitative and quantitative). These measures – to be derived from the guiding principles and confirmed in discussion with stakeholders and legislative bodies – will be used to ensure the various alternatives under consideration are assessed consistently. The Collaborative's approach to these performance measures is more fully explained in Section 5.
- ***Step Three B: Develop Design Options.*** With an agreed-upon set of performance measures and a clear understanding of the unmet needs, the Collaborative will work to identify viable alternatives. A bounded set of potentially feasible alternatives will be developed in consultation with both stakeholders and the legislative bodies. No alternative will be assumed to have greater standing than any other prior to the assessment.
- ***Step Four: Assess Alternatives.*** Using the alternatives and performance measures developed under the previous steps, the Collaborative partners will jointly scope and guide a process to assess the various design options. This process will apply a common set of assumptions, modeling approaches and performance measures to ensure that all options under consideration are evaluated similarly. This step will be undertaken in a fully transparent fashion to ensure interested stakeholders and others can track and comment on the process. Moreover, the Collaborative intends to hire an independent project manager to ensure the set of analyses needed to carry out this project are undertaken in a coordinated and consistent fashion. The Collaborative anticipates using multiple layers of screening – moving from coarse to fine – to focus deliberations on the most viable options.
- ***Step Five: Recommend a Preferred Alternative.*** Based on the alternatives analysis, the Collaborative partners will recommend a preferred alternative for the central waterfront portion and any related actions. This preferred alternative will be fully vetted with interested stakeholders and then forwarded to the city, state and county legislative bodies for their consideration. The preferred alternative will serve as the focus of the environmental review process.

**Figure 2: The Collaborative Process**



In executing the Systems Approach, the Collaborative partners are committed to pooling their engineering, technical, communication and other support as needed to foster a robust process that must both seem and be transparent, accountable and credible. Different agencies will likely take the lead on different facets in support of the Systems Approach. For example, the City of Seattle – consistent with its Urban Mobility Plan – is expected to lead efforts that examine the potential changes to city streets. Similarly, the State would lead any analysis of changes to I-5, and the County would be expected to play a strong role in framing transit changes. Also, as noted elsewhere, each key step

along the way will be informed by an ongoing dialogue both with stakeholders and the relevant legislative bodies. (See Sections 7 and 8 below for greater detail.)

In addition, the agencies will ask the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, as well as local agencies to provide feedback and input as work progresses. All three agencies will seek input and feedback from appropriate resource and permitting agencies to ensure issues are addressed prior to December 2008.

## 5. EVALUATION/PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Step Three of the Systems Approach above calls for the development of a consistent set of performance measures to evaluate different alternatives to meet the demand for moving people and goods to and through central Seattle. These measures are vital, as they will be used by the Collaborative as a consistent yardstick to fairly assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of different alternatives and serve as the basis for the Collaborative’s eventual recommended approach.

Performance measures (both qualitative and quantitative) will be keyed to the six guiding principles outlined earlier in this document. The full suite of performance measures – and any associated weightings – will be developed through a deliberative process that will include the informed input of both stakeholders and the legislative bodies. However, to give interested parties a better understanding of the type of measures likely to be included, provided below is an illustrative sampling of the sorts of performance measures likely to be developed for the evaluation.

<b>Examples of Common Set of Performance Measures to Be Developed to Assess Alternatives for the Central Portion of the Alaskan Way Viaduct</b>	
<b>Guiding Principle</b>	<b>Illustrative Performance Measures</b>
Public safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove south end of the viaduct by 2012</li> <li>• Remove remainder of the viaduct by 2015</li> <li>• Replace seawall between Washington and Pine by 2015</li> <li>• Continue aggressive viaduct inspections, maintenance, and repairs</li> </ul>
Efficient movement of people and goods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate travel times, including freight and transit to and through downtown, including I-5</li> <li>• Consider total person access to and through Seattle’s center city</li> <li>• Consider access to the Duwamish and BINMIC industrial areas and Port facilities</li> </ul>
Economic vitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize construction disruptions on the waterfront</li> <li>• Protect and grow jobs in the Center City area</li> <li>• Maintain access for businesses, industrial centers, and cargo terminals</li> </ul>
Waterfront access, urban design, quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize construction disruptions on the waterfront and in the center city</li> </ul>

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES ONLY

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a waterfront that is safer and more inviting for pedestrians and bicyclists</li> <li>• Improve pedestrian access between downtown and the central waterfront</li> <li>• Provide complete streets that encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use while promoting safe operations for all users</li> </ul>
Fiscally responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a finance plan that is reasonable and achievable</li> <li>• Identify funding sources</li> </ul>
Environmentally sound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support local, regional, and state climate change programs to reduce greenhouse gas emission by reducing vehicle miles and hours traveled</li> <li>• Improve air quality and reduce noise impacts</li> <li>• Improve water quality and near-shore habitat</li> </ul>

Again, the performance measures above are representative examples only and are not meant to be final. The final set of performance measures will be developed based on additional staff analysis, and then presented for discussion with interested parties.

## 6. DECISION-MAKING

The Collaborative partners recognize that it is imperative to put in place a Collaborative structure that can carry forward the Systems Approach in a timely and effective fashion. This management structure, outlined below and summarized graphically in Figure 2, is intended to support coordinated decision-making and provide multiple opportunities and resources to identify and resolve potential roadblocks.

A Project Oversight Committee will be formed and its membership will include the Governor, King County Executive, the Mayor of Seattle, the Chairs of the Senate and House Transportation Committees, one member of the King County Council and one member of the Seattle City Council. The role of the Project Oversight Committee will be to review and comment on the work of the collaborative process and the progress of the project proposals.

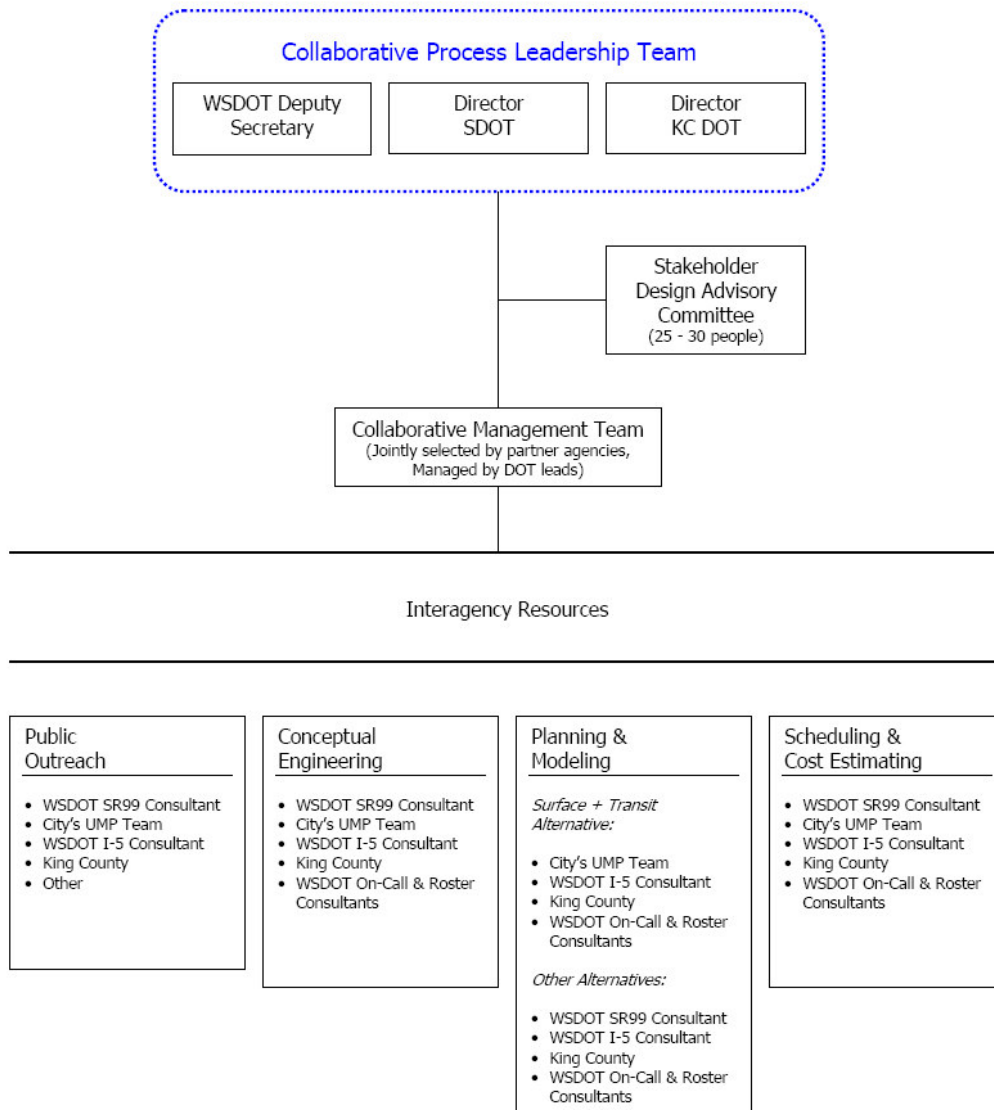
The Governor, King County Executive and the Mayor of Seattle will be responsible for managing the work of the collaborative process.

- ***Collaborative Leadership Team.*** The Collaborative Leadership Team, comprised of the Seattle DOT Director, the King County DOT Director and the Washington State DOT Urban Corridors Office Administrator, has chief responsibility for ensuring the Collaborative is meeting key milestones and moving forward on schedule. The Collaborative Leadership Team is to provide high-level oversight of the Project Management Team and meet weekly to engage and resolve key decisions necessary to keep the project on track. Additionally, the Collaborative Leadership Team has primary responsibility for (1) developing recommendations for each step of the planning process, (2) briefing the standing stakeholder body, and (3) jointly selecting and guiding the Independent Project Manager. Decisions by the Collaborative

Leadership Team will be agreed to by all three agencies. The Collaborative Leadership Team will escalate issues, as needed, to their governmental leadership for discussion and resolution. Meetings may be facilitated, and each member is responsible for attending the weekly meetings or sending a designee.

- ***Collaborative Management Team.*** The Collaborative Management Team has primary responsibility for day-to-day project oversight. The Collaborative Management Team will support the other members of the Collaborative, as needed, in all stakeholder and legislative engagements. The Collaborative Management Team consists of two main facets: the state, city and county project managers, and an independent project manager. Below is a brief description of each component.
  - ***Agency Team.*** The Agency Team consists of the Seattle DOT Deputy Director, the King County DOT Assistant Director and the Washington State DOT Viaduct Program Director. The Agency Team meets as frequently as necessary (but at least weekly) to keep the project on track and is responsible (along with the Collaborative Management Team) for providing direction to the Independent Project Manager. Decisions will be agreed to by all three agencies, and the Agency Team will escalate to the Collaborative Management Team issues to be resolved.
  - ***Independent Project Manager.*** The Independent Project Manager, hired and directed by the Collaborative Leadership Team, has direct responsibility for ensuring the Central Waterfront workplan is completed on time. The Independent Project Manager is expected to have between five and ten staff and is responsible for ensuring the alternatives analysis is carried out in a transparent, consistent and credible fashion. The Independent Project Manager is responsible for identifying issues to be resolved by the Agency Team.

Additionally, as shown in Figure 3 on the following page, the Collaborative process will be supported by interagency resources (both in-house and consultant) to ensure the alternatives assessment is informed by the best available information. These resources include engineering, planning and modeling, urban design, scheduling and cost-estimating, and public outreach. As discussed earlier, different agencies may take the lead on certain elements of the analysis, but all three Collaborative partners will have an equal role in decisions that guide the process.



## 7. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Collaborative is committed to a robust and substantive public involvement process that fosters the informed input of the full range of interested parties. The public involvement effort will be keyed to project milestones such as the development of guiding principles, evaluation measures, alternatives design selection and a recommended approach. The Collaborative partners are committed to a process that ensures a “no surprises” approach; in other words, the effort will be underpinned by frequent communication regarding evolving ideas and approaches to ensure interested stakeholders have an opportunity to be aware of and provide input into the evolving analysis in a timely fashion.

- ***Viaduct Stakeholder Advisory Committee.*** The focal point of the public involvement process will be the establishment of a standing body to be known as the Viaduct Stakeholder Advisory Committee. The charge to this body is to review, deliberate on and provide focused comments on a sequence of central waterfront-related deliverables produced in draft by the Collaborative partners.<sup>1</sup> It is not a decision-making body. The Committee is expected to have between 25 and 30 members, with participants identified and selected by the Governor, Mayor and Executive using a common set of selection criteria.

Candidate selection criteria includes such factors as:

1. Commitment to the charge of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee
2. Commitment to integrate the diverse interests represented on the Stakeholder Advisory Committee
3. Willingness to listen to the views of others
4. Ability to serve as an articulate spokesperson to represent effectively the views of important constituencies.

Additionally, as a group, the Committee should be able to collectively represent the diverse range of stakeholder views. [The Committee will include, but is not limited to, representatives from various business perspectives (downtown, waterfront, industrial), neighborhoods, environmental groups, design and architectural organizations, and labor.] Participants are expected to serve as conduits to others in the community. Committee members are not responsible for “delivering” their constituencies’ support. The Committee is expected to meet every one to two months, with meetings scheduled to inform Collaborative work products in a timely fashion.

In addition to the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, the Collaborative intends to undertake a range of detailed public outreach activities intended to foster widespread awareness and input into the ongoing discussions. Key elements in the outreach approach include but are not limited to the following: frequent public meetings and workshops; web site postings and updates; community-based briefings; information booths at fairs and festivals; information materials; and media outreach.

Consistent with the integrated approach described in this document, the outreach activities described above – including the Stakeholder Advisory Committee – will encompass and inform both the Collaborative process and the city’s Urban Mobility Plan effort. As well, outreach activities will be jointly managed, branded and executed by the three Collaborative partners to ensure consistency in message and information and the efficient use of the agencies’ and public’s time<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> As necessary (comment is broad), the Committee may consider and provide input on issues that have the potential to impact options under consideration for the Central Waterfront portion of the Viaduct.

<sup>2</sup> The only anticipated exceptions to this approach are required environmental reviews where all three agencies are not co-leads.

A detailed public involvement work plan will be developed, with stakeholder input, early in the process to guide the public outreach efforts.

**8. TRI-AGENCY AGREEMENT**

We fully endorse this partnership and are each personally committed to invest the time and resources needed to ensure this project reaches a successful conclusion.

David Dye  
Deputy Secretary,  
Washington State  
Department of  
Transportation

Harold Taniguchi  
Director, King County  
Department of  
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Grace Crunican  
Director, Seattle  
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