

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 17, 2003

To: **Magnolia Bridge -- Design Advisory Group Members**

From: Kirk T. Jones

Subject: Status of Project Since June 4th Meeting

The public scoping process for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) resulted in two new concepts being suggested. These need to be further refined and evaluated to see if they merit being included in the EIS.

One is a modification of Alternative H. It was proposed that instead of building a new bridge in the Wheeler Street corridor, take the money and make improvements to the existing Dravus Street to handle the traffic that is expected to use the northern segment of Alternative H. The design team is doing a traffic analysis to determine how much additional traffic would be expected to use the Dravus corridor. Based upon that a determination can be made on the extent of improvements needed along Dravus to handle that traffic. Likewise, we will know how much traffic will want to use the southern route of H and its impact upon the Galer Flyover and intersection with Elliott Avenue.

The other was requested by the Port of Seattle. They requested that a viable surface/non-bridge alternative across their property be considered for evaluation in the EIS. The design team met with Port staff on June 19th to get clarification of their request. They asked that the design team look at modifications to Alternative C, a road/structure along the east bluff of Magnolia, surface road across their property, and bridge over the railroad tracks connecting to 15th. Three scenarios have been developed, trying to stay within the engineering design standards for this project. Because of topography and design grades there ends up being only a few hundred feet of surface road between the structure along the bluff and the one over the railroad. These concepts have been submitted to Port staff for review and comments. Their comments are due by July 31st.

Once each of the two above concepts have been clearly defined, each will be evaluated against the same screening criteria used to evaluate the alternates A through I. Based

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upon that evaluation, a determination will be made whether either of them will, or will not, be included in the EIS. We will of course get this evaluation out to the public for review and comment. This has been added work to project and has caused some delay. However, it is necessary as we have a responsibility to investigate and evaluate all reasonable alternatives against the project criteria.

On July 15th the design team made a presentation to the Signatory Agency Committee (SAC) which is a State and Federal interagency committee which reviews and approves a project EIS at several steps in the EIS process. The purpose of the committee is to insure coordination between member agencies when a project will need a permit from several of the agencies to be constructed. SAC concluded that it was not necessary for our project to go through their process. Only Alternate A will need a permit from the Corps of Engineers if it is selected as the preferred alternative. The other alternatives would not need a permit from any of the member agencies. This will save some time as we will eliminate the several SAC review/approval activities from the project schedule.

The Consultant Team and the City have finalized the scope of work for the EIS and are now in the process of negotiating the fee for this supplement to their contract. These negotiations are expected to be concluded in the next few weeks.

If you have any questions please call me at 615-0862, or Teresa Platt at 684-3507.