



Strategies to keep people and goods moving in and through Seattle

The Seattle Squeeze and the SR 99 closure
2018-2024

Age Friendly Coalition Meeting
December 21, 2018

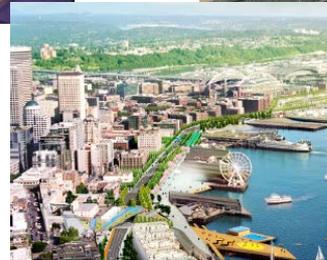
Elliott Helmbrecht
Seattle Department of Transportation



City of Seattle

How we get around is about to change

Over the next five years private and public construction projects will continue to change how we move and deliver goods



Where we are headed



Pike Pine Renaissance



Central Waterfront



WA State Convention Center



Key Arena



Growing light rail system

Our five strategies for downtown mobility



Monitoring and managing our transportation system



Reducing the number of drive-alone trips downtown



Investing in transit and expanding access

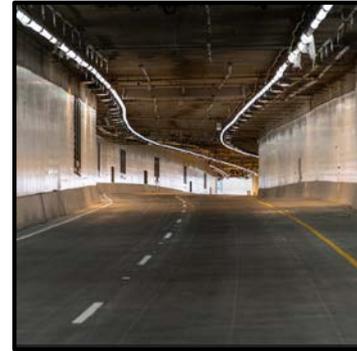
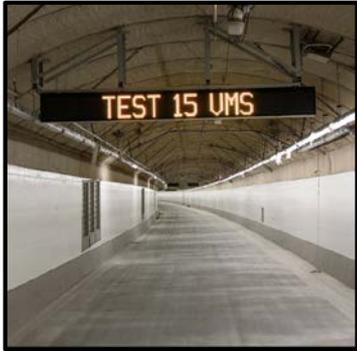


Managing the public right-of-way



Communicating with the public

Program schedule



2018

Early 2019

Tunnel preparation

Fall 2018:

- Switch Alaskan Way travel lanes west (complete)
- Complete tunnel systems testing
- Operations, maintenance and emergency responder staff training
- Preparatory tunnel on- and off-ramp work

SR 99 closure

Jan. 4:

- On- and off-ramps near stadiums close

Jan. 11:

- Full SR 99 closure begins
- Finish eight ramps to/from new tunnel
- Realign SR 99 into new tunnel
- Tunnel grand opening celebration

Tunnel opens

Feb*:

- Closure ends and SR 99 tunnel opens
- SR 99 NB off-ramp to downtown and Alaskan Way opens

Work begins

Feb*:

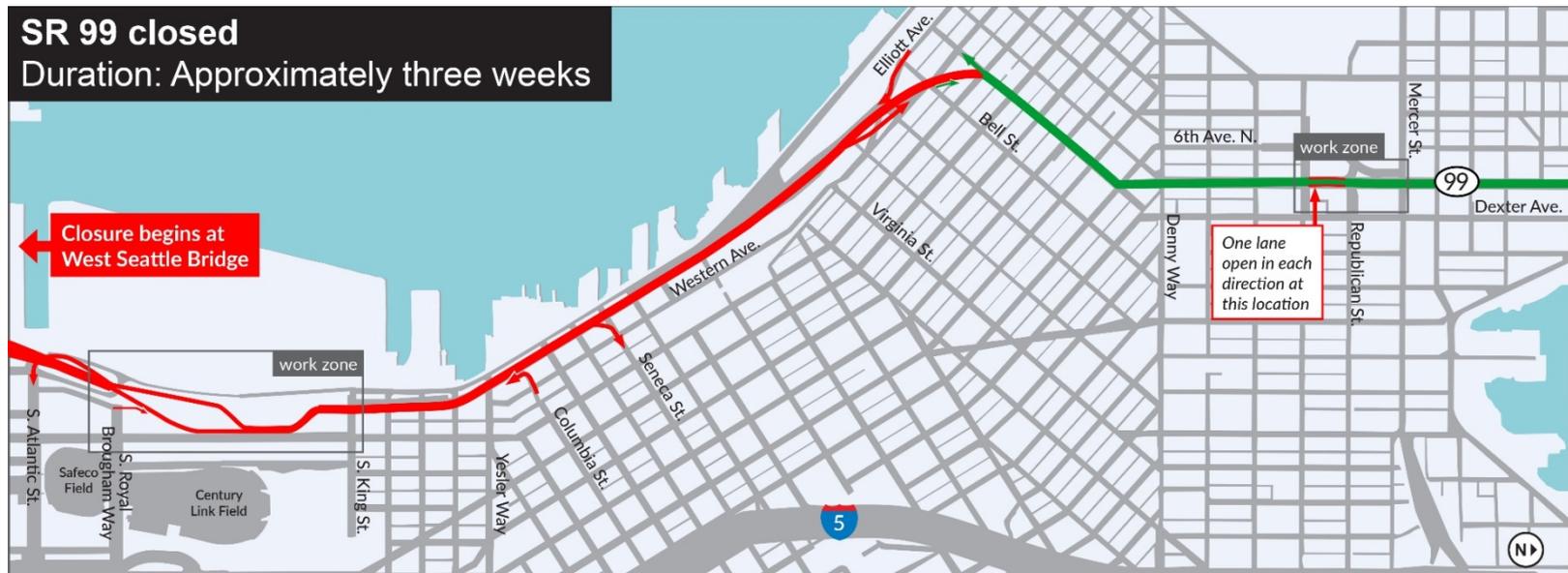
- Viaduct removal
- Closing and filling Battery Street Tunnel
- Rebuilding three blocks of Aurora Avenue North

*Closure is approximately three weeks long but duration will depend on progress.

SR 99 closure and tunnel opening: get ready

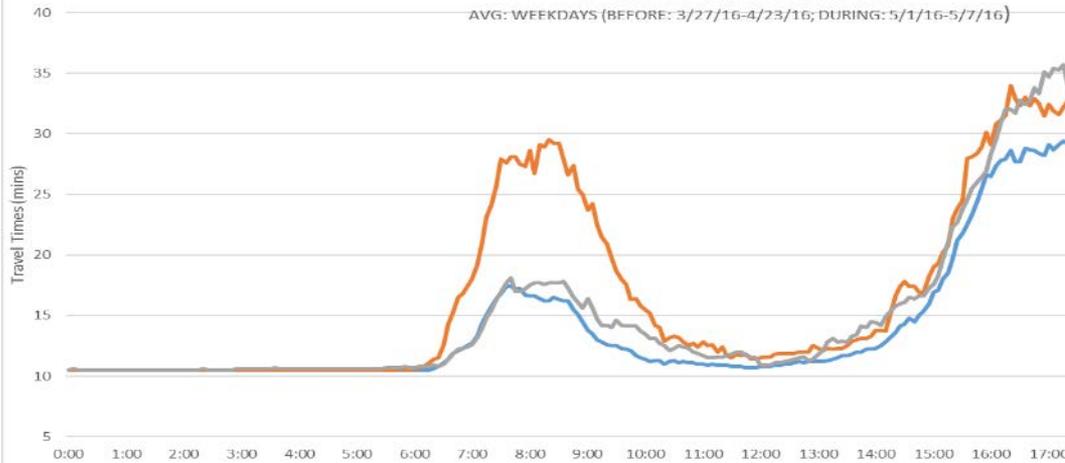
Scheduled to begin January 11, 2019

- **Duration:** about three-weeks for SR 99 closure and up to three weeks of ramp closures
- **Closing a highway adds more drivers to other parts of the system:** 90,000 vehicles per day, including several thousand trucks, and buses have to use another route
- **Expect long backups:** On I-5 and routes into downtown Seattle, especially during peak commute times
- **Major change to transportation system:** New SR 99 tunnel will open, other construction continues

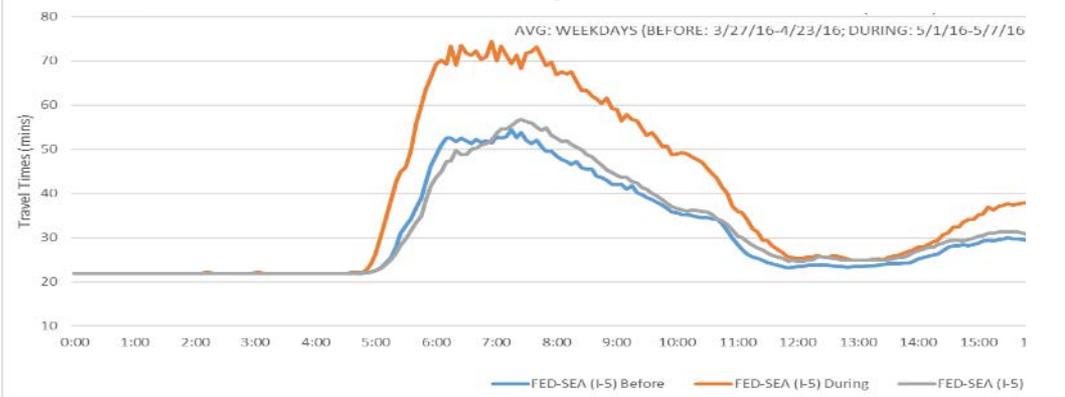


2016 SR 99 closure

Travel time: Bellevue to Seattle (I-90 westbound)



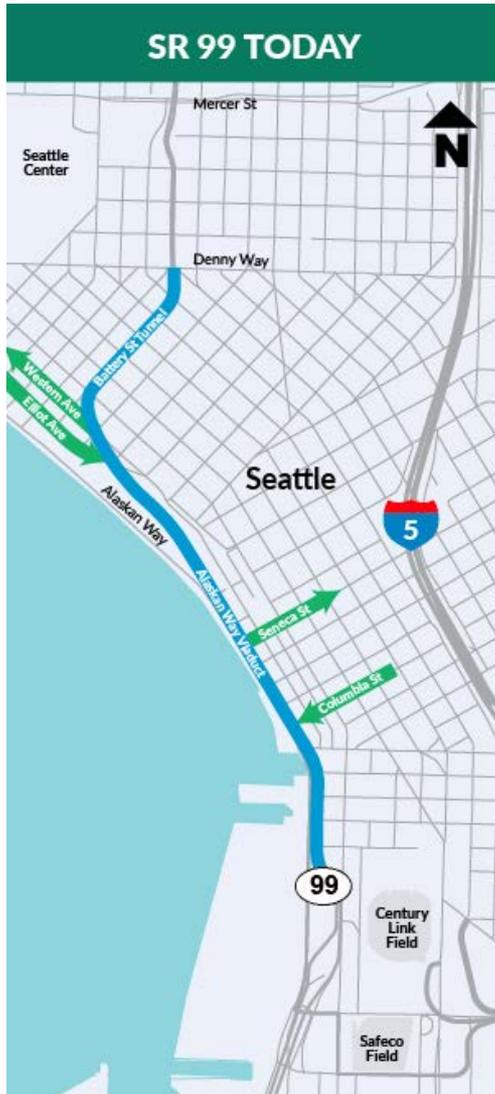
Travel time: Federal Way to Seattle (I-5 northbound)



What we experienced during nine-day SR 99 closure in 2016

- Region-wide impacts: higher travel times on I-5, SR 520, I-90
- Peak commutes started earlier and lasted longer
- More vehicles on downtown streets
- Sound Transit commuter rail ridership increased by 5 to 10%
- West Seattle water taxi ridership increased 135%, Vashon passenger ferry service increased by 27%
- Longer travel times for King County Metro buses rerouted off SR 99
- More cyclists on the road to avoid congestion

Finding a new normal in ongoing changes



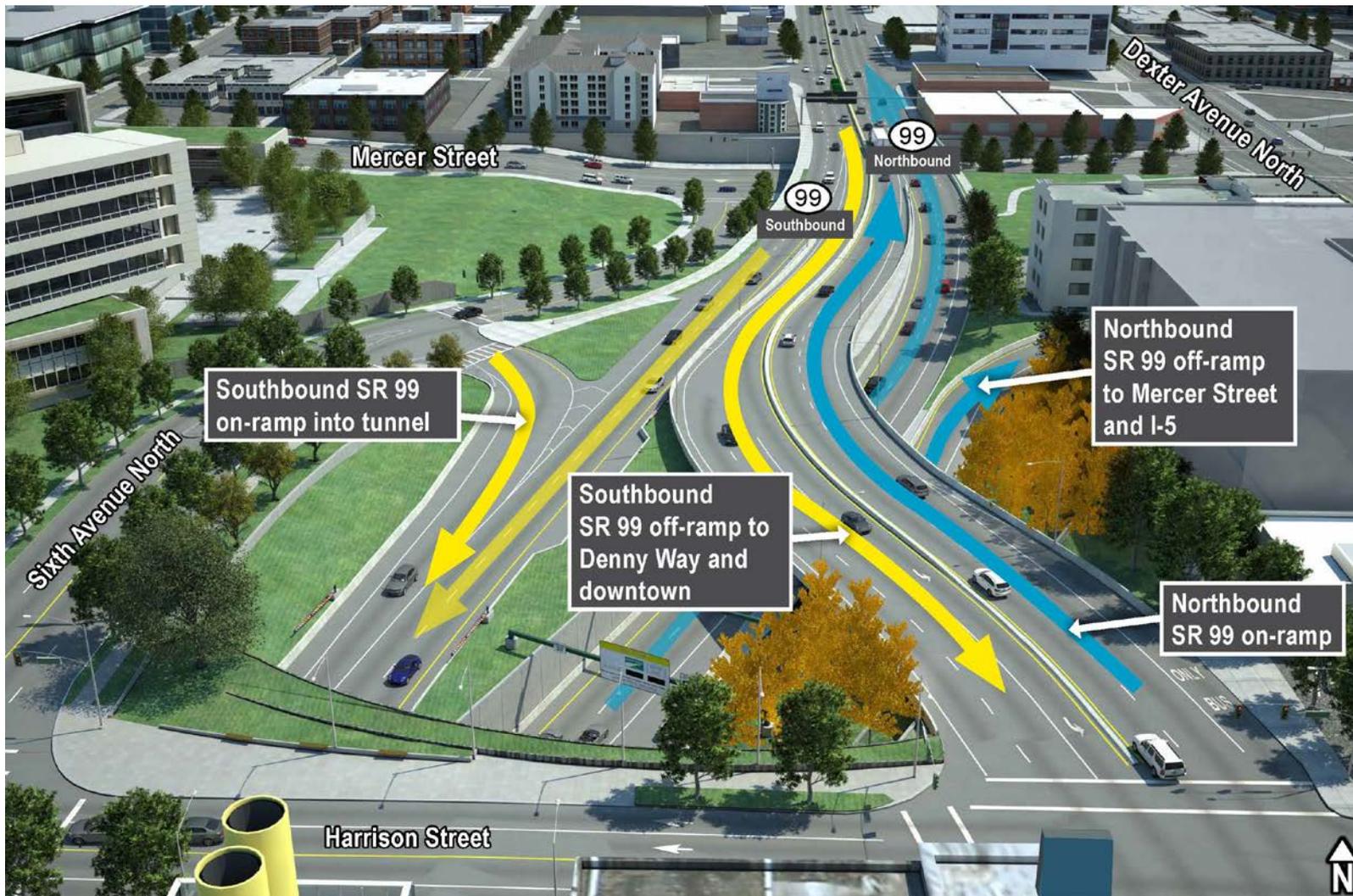
Opening the new SR 99 tunnel is just the start:

- Tunnel will open toll-free for a period of time.
- Traffic patterns will change because we are changing access to SR 99.
- Construction continues after the tunnel opens to drivers.

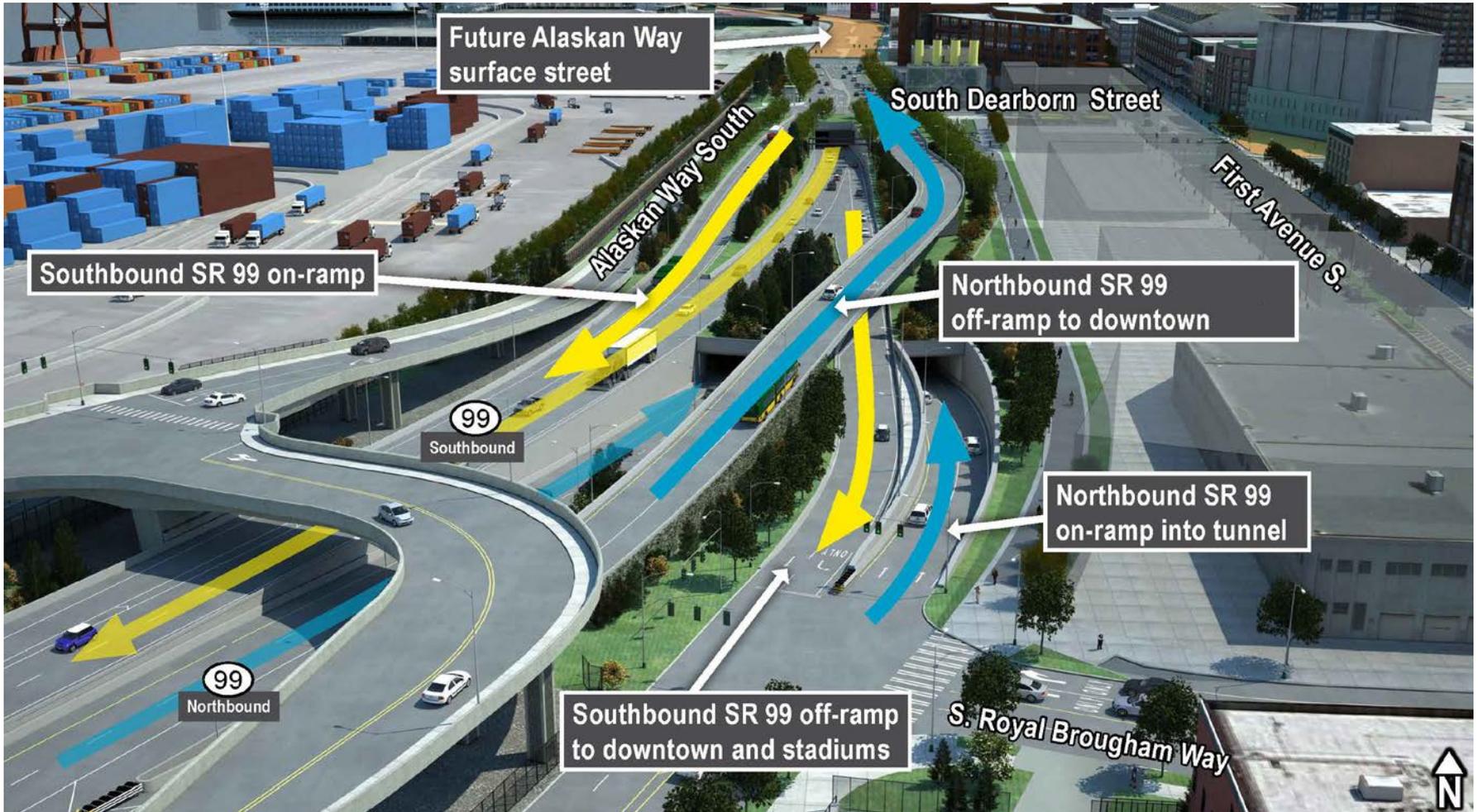
Seattle will experience ongoing change:

- It will take time before traffic patterns settle out.
- Tolls range from \$1 to \$2.25 with a *Good To Go* pass.
- Some trips will be quicker and others will be longer.
- The City will rebuild the new Alaskan Way, which will open in 2021.

New SR 99 ramps at the north portal – Looking north



Opening the tunnel: Ramps at the south portal



Construction after the SR 99 tunnel opens



Viaduct removal: Approx. 6 months

Battery Street Tunnel decommissioning:
Approx. 24 months

North surface street connections: Approx.
15 months



Responding to the SR 99 closure



Staff Transportation Operations Center 24/7 and deploy police at key transit intersections



Extend transit priority hours on 3rd Avenue to 6AM to 7PM, add bus trips on key Metro routes, and support Metro's additional Water Taxi service



Modify and schedule permitted construction work for maximum travel capacity



Work with downtown Seattle employers to provide SR 99 consultations and support through Commute Seattle



Launch www.seattle.gov/traffic with corridor specific travel information to help plan your trips



We're entering a new normal

Now – 2022

- Construction impacts surface streets from WSCC Addition construction and Key Arena redevelopment

January-February 2019

- Alaskan Way Viaduct closes 1/11. Longest highway closure in Puget Sound until SR 99 Tunnel opens about 3 weeks later

February – June 2019

- WSDOT removes the Viaduct and starts work on BST and north surface streets

March 23, 2019

- Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel becomes light rail only, bringing 7 significant regional bus routes onto City streets

Summer 2019:

- Construction of the new Alaskan Way begins, lasting until 2021

As early as summer 2019:

- Tolling begins on the SR 99 tunnel, initially resulting in traffic diversion onto downtown streets.

Preparing for Seattle Transit Tunnel being for Light Rail ONLY in March 2019



Share real-time construction and traffic information with web map providers



Add off-board fare payment on 3rd Ave for quicker boarding and build a new transit path on 5th and 6th Avenues



Limit SDOT construction and maintenance work downtown



Expand Ride2 Service to SE Seattle; Encourage and support ORCA LIFT sales



Continue public engagement and awareness





What you can do to plan and prepare

We Need Your Help

- How can we reduce drive-alone trips during the most congested times?
- How can you help us prepare the region for traffic and travel changes to and through downtown Seattle?
- How can we work together to inform your family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors?

How you can prepare

- Stay informed
- Whenever possible, don't drive alone
- Be flexible and creative
- Leave extra time
- Share information with your networks
- Sign up for alerts at www.seattle.gov/traffic
- Research commute options at www.kingcounty.gov/getready



Questions?

How to REACH SDOT

Know Before You Go:

www.seattle.gov/traffic

Twitter:

@seattledot

@SDOTtraffic

Metro Trip Planning Resources:

<https://kingcounty.gov/getready>

How to REACH WSDOT

WSDOT Live Traffic Cameras:

www.wsdot.com/traffic/seattle/default.aspx

WSDOT Travel Times:

www.wsdot.com/traffic/traveltimes/default.aspx

Twitter:

@BerthaDigsSR99

#Realign99

Email:

viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov

www.99tunnel.com | www.AlaskanWayViaduct.org

Back Pocket Slides

Water Taxi



- 10 minute ride from Seacrest Park in West Seattle
- 22 minute ride from Vashon Island to downtown
- Second vessel for West Seattle routes
- Additional 250 parking spots at Pier 2 with shuttle to Seacrest Park
- Additional parking at Harbor Ave SW and SW Bronson Way
- Dedicated Vanshare parking at Don Armeni Park
- Added shuttle service (Route 773 and 775) from the Junction and Alki Beach



Southend transit pathways sequence

During AWP full Closure – Before tunnel opens

- **Duration:** 4 - 5 weeks
- **Affected routes:** 21x, 37, 55, 56, 57, 113, 120, 121, 122, 123, 125, C Line

Interim pathway via 1st Ave S

- **Duration:** 9 months – 1 year
- **Affected routes:** 21x, 37, 55, 56, 57, 113, 120, 121, 122, 123, 125, C Line

Permanent southend pathway

- **Duration:** Permanent
- **Affect:** When the Viaduct Demolition, Waterfront, and Columbia St 2-Way Configuration projects are complete, this pathway will use transit lanes on SR 99, Alaskan Way Surface St, and Columbia St for both ingress and egress of the Seattle CBD.



The information included here has been compiled by King County Metro staff from a variety of sources and is subject to change without notice.



King County

SR 99 closure North end transit pathways

- Aurora buses will be impacted by North Portal area work
- Routes includes E, 5, 5X, 26, 28



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Buses out of Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel

Current Tunnel Routes	Proposed Surface Street Pathway
41 (all-day)	3 rd Ave (SB and NB)
74 (peak service only)	2 nd Ave (SB) – 5 th /6 th Ave (NB)
255 (all-day)	5 th Ave (SB) – 5 th /6 th Ave (NB)
101 (all-day)	2 nd Ave (SB) – 4 th Ave (NB)
102 (peak service only)	
150 (all-day)	
550 (all-day)	

- All buses come out of the Downtown Seattle: March 23, 2019
- **Mitigation:** Reroutes to surface streets downtown; added service hours to maintain service reliability; capital improvements to pathways and bus stops
- **Communications:** Rider alerts, street teams, social media, web presence