Strategies to keep people and goods moving in and through Seattle

SR 99 Closure and the Seattle Squeeze 2018-2024

Puget Sound Regional Council
Transportation Policy Board
January 10, 2019
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 pillars for downtown mobility

1. Monitoring and managing our transportation system
2. Investing in transit and expanding access
3. Reducing the number of drive-alone trips downtown
4. Managing the public right-of-way
5. Communicating with the public
Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program

Program schedule

2018
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

Jan. 4:
- On- and off-ramps near stadiums closed

Jan. 11:
- Full SR 99 closure begins
- Finish eight ramps to/from new tunnel
- Realign SR 99 into new tunnel
- Tunnel grand opening celebration

Early 2019
SR 99 closure
Feb*:
- Closure ends and SR 99 tunnel opens
- SR 99 NB off-ramp to downtown and Alaskan Way opens

Tunnel 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.
Why close SR 99 for three weeks?

Connecting SR 99 to the tunnel: Crews will have to work in the path of SR 99’s current configuration to connect SR 99 to the new tunnel. The graphics below show the path of SR 99 today (yellow) and work zones during the closure (orange).

Ramp closures - Up to six week of impact:

- On Jan. 4, 2019, WSDOT closed the S Atlantic St. southbound off-ramp and the northbound Royal Brougham Way on-ramp.
- After the new SR 99 tunnel opens, the northbound off-ramp to downtown will remain closed for up to two weeks.
SR 99 closure and tunnel opening: get ready

Scheduled to begin tomorrow, Jan. 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
Event agenda
99StepForward.com
Feb. 2 – 3, 2019

Saturday
- Fun run
- Ribbon cutting ceremony
- Public festival
- Public tunnel walk/access
- Goodbye to the viaduct/hello waterfront

Sunday
- Bike ride
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

Filling and sealing the Battery Street Tunnel: Approx. 24 months

North surface street connections: Approx. 15 months
SR 99 closure / tunnel opening multi-agency planning effort

**Agency executive team**
- Includes agency executives from WSDOT, WSDOT, King County Metro, Port of Seattle, and Sound Transit
- Meets monthly to discuss and resolve issues

**Core team**
- Includes agency leadership and leads from each work group
- Meets twice a month to discuss and resolve issues identified by work groups

**Construction / traffic and operations group**
- Weekly meetings

**Communications group**
- Biweekly meetings
Southend transit pathways sequence

During AWV 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.
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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Investing in transit and expanding access

- Add peak and shoulder-period trips with STBD, Metro and Amazon (September 2018)
- Expand transit priority hours on 3rd Avenue to 7 days/week (August 2018)
- Permit free-floating bike share to improve first mile/last mile access (10,000 bikes by SR99 closure)
- Identify and prepare staging areas for Metro buses to maintain transit reliability
- Increase West Seattle Water Taxi service – extra boat added
- Launch Ride 2 on-demand shuttle and increase existing shuttle service
- Improve access for drivers, carshare, rideshare and bike share
Reducing the number of drive-alone trips downtown

- Partner with major employers to promote flexible work options
- Expand TDM marketing and pretax program engagement
- Support employer shuttle access to transit zones and private park-and-ride locations
- Metro: WorkSmart consultations for flexwork; carpool incentives
- WSDOT: Free SR-99 Closure consultations through Commute Seattle
- WSDOT, Metro and City of Seattle: expanding agency employee flexible work opportunities to decrease peak-hour drive alone trips

SDOT, Commute Seattle, Challenge Seattle: Move the Needle Flexwork Challenge

MOVE THE NEEDLE: JOIN THE FLEXWORK CHALLENGE!

The upcoming three-week highway 99 viaduct closure beginning January 11, 2007 and six total weeks of related travel disruption will cause serious impacts to employee travel throughout our region. Commute Seattle and the Seattle Department of Transportation are challenging Seattle employers to take action now to alleviate the most severe delays during this period.

Businesses like yours are pledging to help their employees avoid peak commute trips in January by promoting Flexwork commuting alternatives.
Travel Options

• Free Waterfront Shuttle – connecting C/ID, Pioneer Square, the Waterfront, Retail District and Seattle Center between 6 am and 8 pm
• First Mile/Last Mile Connections to Transit - $2.75 discount on Uber, Lyft and ReachNow
• Ride2 – On Demand Shuttle services to Eastgate Park-and-Ride and West Seattle Water Taxi
Monitoring and managing our transportation system

• Monitor and respond 24/7 to changing traffic conditions and weather
  • Metro staff on site to coordinate routing changes
  • Added traffic cameras and monitoring devices
  • Increased incident response teams
  • WSDOT increasing I-5 active traffic management system

• Increase use of real-time construction, bridge openings, railroad closing, and travel time data by 3rd party applications

• Deploy temporary dynamic message signs to share real-time and routing information
Monitoring and managing our transportation system

- Add temporary transit lanes on Cherry, West Seattle Bridge, 4th Ave S and Aurora
- Eliminate eastbound contraflow lanes on Seneca St
- Open transit and freight bypass between Alaskan Way and E. Marginal Way
- Allow all traffic to use the southbound HOV lane from Mercer to Corson
- **Restrict on-street parking on key arterials**
- Expand hours when the key bridges do not open for mariners (Coast Guard)
Managing the public right-of-way

- Work with contractors to maximize ROW available during the SR99 closure
  - Temporarily revoke selected permits on key arterials
  - Expedite permits for street restoration in advance of the closure
  - Proactively managing construction project schedules
- Deploy Uniformed Police Officers at key transit intersections to maintain transit access and movements
- Launch e-Cargo trike pilot with UW to test strategies to maintain access and movement for urban goods
Regional Coordinated Communications

• Conducted 100s of briefings- often jointly
• Provided regular, proactive engagement with media, in coordination with partners.
• Launched www.seattle.gov/traffic with real-time corridor information subscriptions
• Launched www.kingcounty.gov/getready for travel resources
• Distributed translated materials through community centers, libraries, daycare centers and Seattle Public Schools
SR 99 closure and tunnel opening: plan and prepare

We need the public’s help: make a plan for #Realign99

• Stay informed and sign up for alerts
  • www.seattle.gov/traffic
  • www.kingcounty.gov/getready
  • www.99tunnel.com
• Shift your travel time
• Bike or walk
• Carpool or vanpool
• Use transit, particularly light rail and King County Water Taxi
• Flex your work schedule to avoid peak travel times, work from home, postpone discretionary trips, take time off
• Be prepared for your new travel route when the tunnel opens
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

March 23, 2019
- Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel becomes light rail only, bringing 7 significant regional bus routes onto City streets

Early 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.

2021
- Light rail opens to Northgate

2023
- Light rail opens to the Eastside
Questions?

**SDOT**

Know Before You Go:
[www.seattle.gov/traffic](http://www.seattle.gov/traffic)

Twitter:
@seattledot
@SDOTtraffic

**King County Metro**

Metro Trip Planning Resources:
[https://kingcounty.gov/getready](https://kingcounty.gov/getready)

**Commute Seattle**

Website:
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