



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL | DISTRICT 1
COUNCILMEMBER LISA HERBOLD

September 12, 2018

SENT BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

Linea Laird, Interim Director
Seattle Department of Transportation

Congratulations on your appointment as Interim Director of the Seattle Department of Transportation. I look forward to working with you in your new position.

I'm writing you today about access from West Seattle to Downtown once the Alaskan Way Viaduct is permanently closed. My understanding is this could take place later this year, or in early 2019.

Currently, buses and commuters from West Seattle can access Downtown via the Alaskan Way Viaduct, using an exit at Seneca Street and an entrance at Columbia Street. When the Alaskan Way Viaduct is closed this access will no longer exist. Eventually, permanent access to Downtown from SR99 to Downtown will be through a rebuilt Alaskan Way with a transit lane; buses will turn right at Columbia Street, then continue on 3rd Avenue.

My understanding is that for the 4-5 week period after the Alaskan Way Viaduct is closed, buses will use a temporary route until the tunnel opens, that could include 4th Avenue South and 3rd Avenue Downtown.

Following that, after the SR99 tunnel opens, an Interim Pathway will be used for 9-12 months, until a rebuilt Alaskan Way reopens. That Interim Pathway will travel from SR99 onto 1st Avenue at Dearborn, then continue on to Cherry and Columbia, then continue northbound on 3rd Avenue.

Does SDOT intend to reserve a dedicated lane for buses on 1st Avenue during the 9-12 months it is planned for use as an Interim Pathway? Since the dedicated transit lane planned for the 1st Avenue Streetcar is unnecessary while the project is on hold, this would put the already planned dedicated transit lane to very good use. West Seattle commuters will bear a heavy share of the burden for the closure of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. According to 2017 data there are over 29,000 daily boardings on buses from West Seattle and adjacent communities that access Downtown via the Alaskan Way Viaduct.

While it may not be possible to mitigate all aspects of the closure of the Alaskan Way Viaduct, it's important to do what we can to ameliorate the significant impact during the period when an Interim Pathway will be needed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lisa Herbold

CC: Mayor Jenny Durkan
Councilmember Mike O'Brien