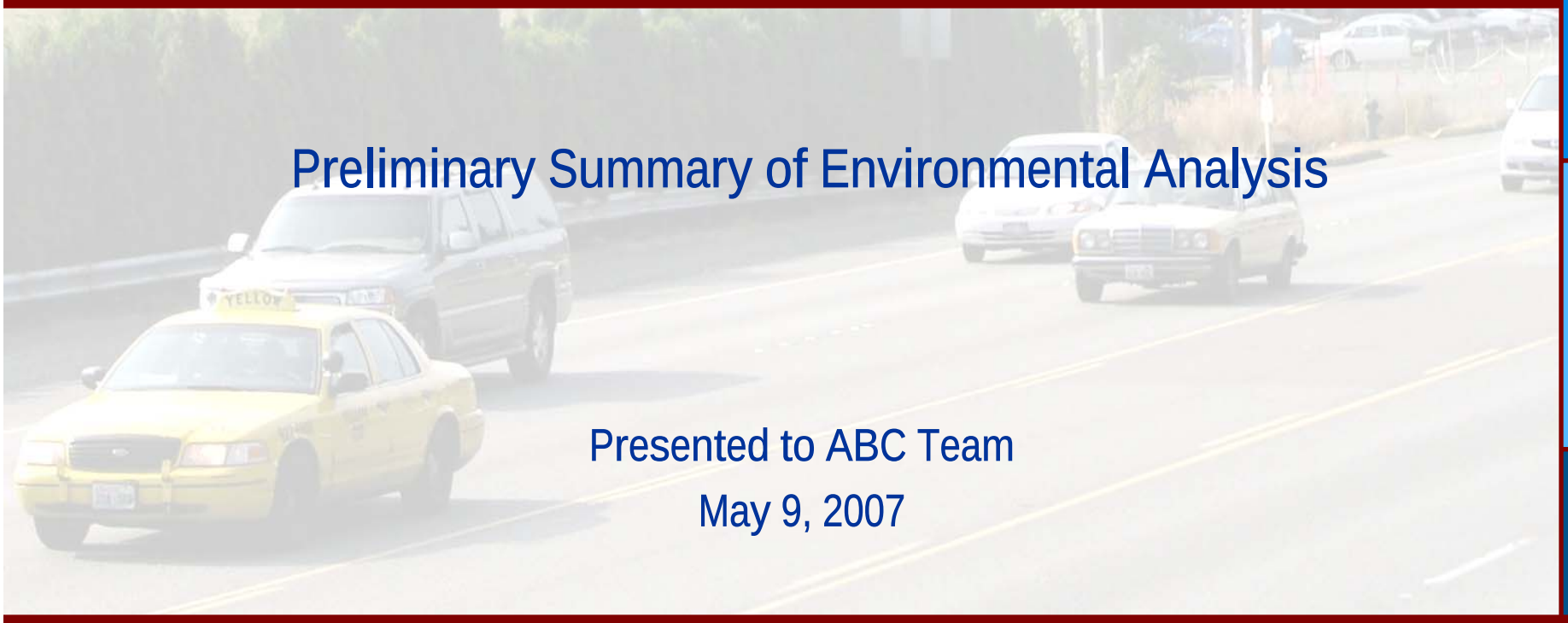
Aurora Corridor Improvement Project

N. 165th Street–N. 205th Street



Preliminary Summary of Environmental Analysis

Presented to ABC Team

May 9, 2007

Purpose of Environmental Process

- Objective analysis of potential environmental effects
- Identification of mitigation measures to avoid or minimize effects
- Public disclosure of impacts and mitigation
- Transparency in process
- Used by City and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to make decisions about the project

Presentation Content

- Overview/summary of process to date
- Preliminary results of environmental analysis
- Next project milestones

Summary of Process to Date

- In 2006 – AB Team, other community outreach
- Scoping period, public meetings, agency outreach
- Preliminary environmental investigation
- Preliminary meetings with WSDOT, City SEPA official
- Research, writing of technical reports began in Feb
- Submittal of technical reports to WSDOT/FHWA

Topics Studied for Project

Discipline Reports

- Hazardous Materials
- Land Use, Plans and Policies
- Historic, Cultural, and Archeological Resources
- Socio-Economic
- Environmental Justice
- Visual Impacts
- Transportation
- Noise
- Water Quality/Surface Water
- Wetlands

Technical Memorandums

- Earth (Geology and Soils)
- Air Quality
- Public Services and Utilities
- Wildlife, Fish, and Vegetation *(to be used only for Biological Assessment)*

Not Needed for this Project

- Floodplain
- Groundwater
- Public Lands

Discipline Reports

What are they?

- Technical reports that assess environmental impacts and mitigation
- For this project, procedures are set by FHWA and implemented through WSDOT
- Evaluates project impacts and mitigation, and describes the analysis methods used

Discipline Reports

For this project…

- Assessed No Build + three Build Alternatives
- Finalized upon review / approval by WSDOT and FHWA
- Available for public review after finalization
- Public meeting will be held to review results prior to City selection of Recommended Alternative
- Results of analysis determine necessary level of NEPA and SEPA review

Preliminary Environmental Results

Why preliminary?

- Analysis complete (except for economic analysis and cultural resources) but not all reports are submitted
- Technical reports reviewed by WSDOT and FHWA for “concurrence”
- Once concurrence is provided, reports will be made available for public review

Preliminary Environmental Results

No difference between Build Alternatives…

- Air Quality
- Geology and Soils
- Utilities and Public Services
- Fish, Wildlife, & Vegetation
- Wetlands & US Waters
- Noise
- Environmental Justice
- Water Quality**

***From 'environmental standards' point of view*

Air Quality

- During Project Construction
  - Dust emissions would be minor, temporary, and localized
    - Mitigation - Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) requires employment of Best Available Control Technology (BACT) to minimize dust emissions and prevent soil trackout
- After Project Completion
  - Carbon Monoxide (CO) emissions within allowable emission budget – no impacts

Conclusions the same for all three Build Alternatives

Geology and Soils

- During Project Construction
  - Potential degradation to subgrade from use of heavy equipment during wet weather
    - Mitigation – Limit earthwork to drier seasons; limit movement of heavy equipment; maintain proper surface drainage
  - Increase potential for erosion due to greater exposure of soils and unstable fill during excavation
    - Mitigation – Temporary Erosion and Sedimentation Control (TESC) Plan
- No impacts after Project completion

Conclusions the same for all three Build Alternatives

Utilities and Public Services

- During Project Construction
  - Potential disruption of utility service during project construction and utility relocation
    - Mitigation – Coordination with service providers and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to avoid or minimize disruption
  - Potential for construction-related traffic operations to impede emergency response time
    - Mitigation – Coordination with emergency service providers and implementation of a construction Traffic Control Plan
- No impacts after Project completion

Conclusions the same for all three Build Alternatives

Fish, Wildlife and Vegetation

- During Project Construction
  - Potential impacts to water quality downstream of Echo Lake
    - Mitigation – Implementation of stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) and measures that could include silt fences, straw bales, covering exposed soil, temporary storm drain filter inserts, and street sweeping
- No impacts after Project completion

Conclusions the same for all three Build Alternatives

Wetlands

…and Other "Waters of the US"

- No wetlands in Project area
- Construction of project will fill three ditches (total of 401 square feet)
    - Mitigation – Stormwater facilities constructed as part of Project will result in improvement over function served by the ditches

Conclusions the same for all three Build Alternatives

Noise

- During Project Construction
  - Temporary construction noise at nearby noise-sensitive receivers
    - Mitigation – Construction Noise Reduction Plan
- After Project Completion
  - Modeled 2030 noise levels exceed FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria at five locations
    - Four locations do not meet WSDOT criteria for noise barrier wall
    - One location meets criteria for noise wall – at discretion of property owner

Conclusions the same for all three Build Alternatives

Environmental Justice

- No disproportionate effects to minority or low income populations identified to result from the Project
- Potential for limited English proficiency identified among Hispanic, Korean, and Chinese populations in Project area
  - Mitigation – Outreach related to Project also provided in Spanish, Korean, and Chinese

Conclusions the same for all three Build Alternatives

Water Quality

- During Project Construction
  - Increased risk of sediment released to stormwater
    - Mitigation – Implementation of stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) and measures that could include silt fences, straw bales, covering exposed soil, temporary storm drain filter inserts, and street sweeping
- Completed Project will have beneficial effect on stormwater – reduction in peak flows and pollutant loading

Alternatives B and C have more potential for implementation of natural stormwater elements, however, any of the three Build Alternatives would result in beneficial effect to stormwater

Preliminary Environmental Results

Some difference between Build Alternatives…

- Visual Quality
- Transportation
- Hazardous Materials

Visual Quality

- During Project Construction
  - Temporary changes to visual environment include views of construction equipment, construction activities, staging areas, nighttime lighting
    - Mitigation – Locate storage and staging in areas that are not visually prominent; Shield screen lights

Construction related conclusions the same for all three Build Alternatives

Visual Quality

- Project completion should result in overall beneficial effect to visual quality

Conclusions the same for all three Build Alternatives.

- Minimal addition of light and/or glare
  - Mitigation – Plant vegetation in median, and for Alternatives B and C, in amenity zone; Shield or screen street lights

Higher level of mitigation from planted vegetation under Alternatives B and C

Transportation

- During Project Construction
  - Reduced traffic capacity
  - Transit rerouted and/or bus stops relocated
  - Business access altered
    - Mitigation – Construction traffic control plan, clear signage, relocation of bus stops, construction communication plan for local businesses, residents, emergency service providers

Conclusions the same for all three Build Alternatives.

Transportation

- Completion of Project results in
  - beneficial effect to traffic operations through 2030 design year

Conclusions the same for all three Build Alternatives.

(Operations at LOS F under No Build Alternative)

  - Beneficial effect to safety

Greater safety benefit to pedestrians under Alternatives B and C - amenity zone provides more separation from traffic

Hazardous Materials

- Two sites identified for Phase II site assessment (test soil and groundwater) under three Build Alternatives
  - Former gas station at 18425 Aurora Avenue N
  - Former gas station at 17550 Aurora Avenue N
- Additional site identified for Phase II site assessment under Alternative C
  - Former dry cleaner at 18419 Aurora Avenue N
- Potential to encounter lead/asbestos during building demolition
  - Greater potential with greater number of impacted buildings
    - Mitigation – Abatement according to state and federal regulations

Hazardous Materials

- Potential for spills during project construction
    - Mitigation – City maintain spill prevention and response protocols

Conclusion the same for all three Build Alternatives

- Potential for spills after Project completion
    - Mitigation – City maintain spill prevention and response protocols

Conclusion the same for No Build and all three Build Alternatives

Preliminary Environmental Results

More difference between Build Alternatives…

- Land Use, Plans, and Policies
- Economics

Land Use, Plans, and Policies

- Project is generally consistent with City's adopted goals and policies in land use, transportation, capital facilities, utilities, economic development
- In general, Project is consistent with adopted 32 Points, except
  - No amenity zone in Alternative A conflicts with points 3 and 4
  - Curb bulbs not proposed on side streets (point 26)
  - No pedestrian-only signals (point 29) proposed
  - Reduction in speed limit to 35 mph (point 31) cannot be implemented without evidence for need from corridor speed study

Land Use, Plans, and Policies

- Ordinance 326
  - Alternatives A and B are consistent
  - Alternative C is not consistent

Land Use, Plans, and Policies

- Building/structure impacts (potential full or partial demolition) identified under three Build Alternatives (worst case)
  - Alternative A – 5 buildings
  - Alternative B – 7 buildings
  - Alternative C – 10 buildings
- Parking supply on private properties affected under three Build Alternatives (conforming parking)
  - Alternative A – 17 properties
  - Alternative B – 18 properties
  - Alternative C – 31 properties
    - Mitigation: Property owners compensated for property takes

Economics

- During project construction
  - Potential impacts to businesses due to restricted traffic access and flow
    - "Convenience" businesses (gas stations, fast food, convenience stores, etc) more heavily impacted than "Destination" businesses
    - Mitigation – Construction Management Plan; Communication Plan; signage; marketing; to minimize adverse effects

Conclusion the same for all three Build Alternatives

Economics

- Losses related to property take in proportion to amount of property take (greatest under Alternative C)
    - Mitigation: Property owners compensated for property takes

Impact greatest under Alternative C

- After Project Completion
  - Analysis still underway

Cultural

- Analysis not complete, however, we do know…
  - Four properties eligible for National Historic Register
  - Know that three of four properties will not be affected
  - Evaluation still underway regarding impact to fourth property (Red Brick Road)

Upcoming Project Milestones

- Environmental Discipline Reports
- Public Review / Comment (June – July 2007)
- Selection of Recommended Alternative (July 2007)
- Lead Agencies Determine Level of Environmental Report
- NEPA and SEPA Environmental Reports (August 2007)
- Public Review / Comment (October 2007)
- Finalize NEPA and SEPA Environmental Reports
- Lead Agency Determination (~December 2007)