Alaskan Way Viaduct
REPLACEMENT
PROGRAM

Seattle City Council

March 10, 2014

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

WSDOT

King County

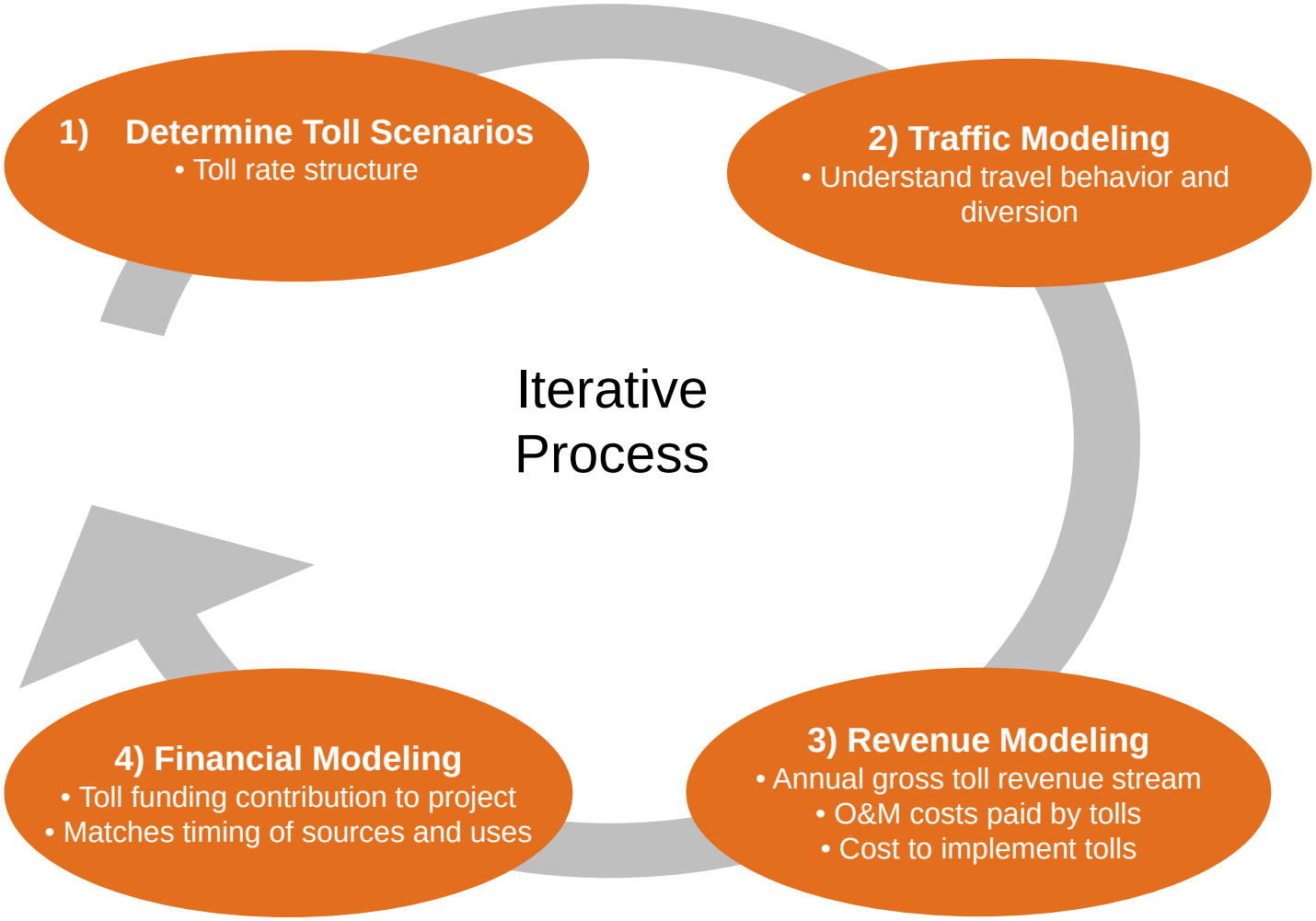
Port of Seattle

City of Seattle

Advisory Committee on Tolling and Traffic Management

- Committee formed in 2011.
- The committee's scope was established via:
  - Federal Highway Administration-issued Record of Decision.
  - Seattle Department of Transportation and WSDOT Memorandum of Agreement.
  - City of Seattle's resolution 31323.
- The committee has made advisory recommendations on strategies for:
  - Tolling the SR 99 tunnel.
  - Minimizing traffic diversion from the tunnel due to tolling.
  - Mitigating traffic diversion effects on city streets and I-5.

Four-Step Planning Process



Toll Scenarios Analyzed

Scenario	Toll rate	Toll variables
1	$1.00 - $3.25	Daytime and weekends; no escalation.
2	$0.75 - $2.25	Daytime; no escalation.
3	$0.75 - $2.50	Daytime; one-time increase of 20% in July 2030.
4	$1.25 - $2.75	Daytime and weekends; no escalation.
5a	$0.50 - $0.75	Daytime; escalation of 1.3% per year.
5b	$1.75 peak only	Weekday peak periods; escalation of 1.3% per year.
6	$0.45 - $3	Daytime and weekends; no escalation
7	$1.00 - $1.25	Daytime, weekends and overnight; escalation of 1.3% per year.

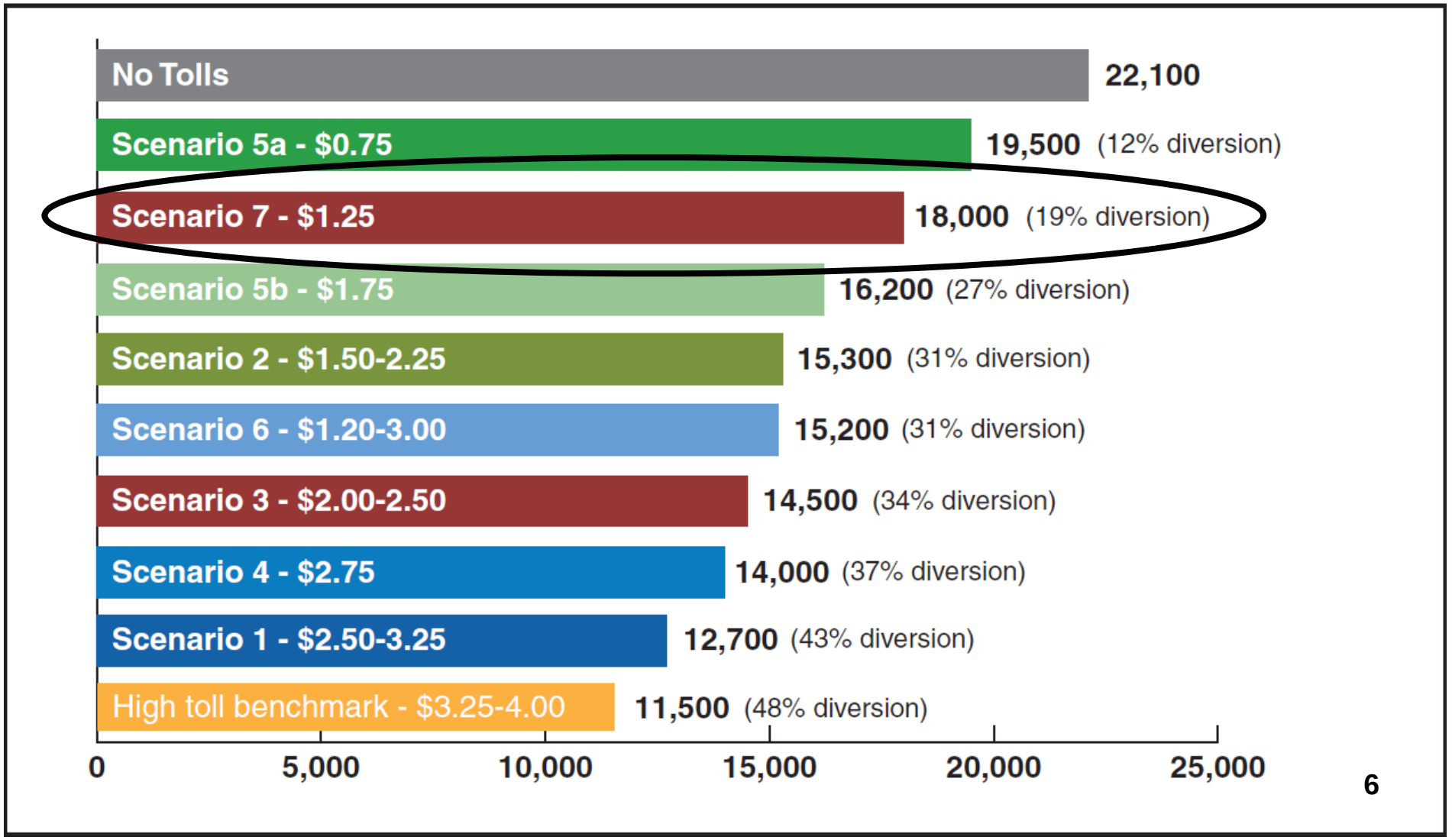
All scenarios include toll rates that vary by time of day.
No toll and high toll ($1 - $4) were studied as benchmarks.

Revenue Results for all Scenarios

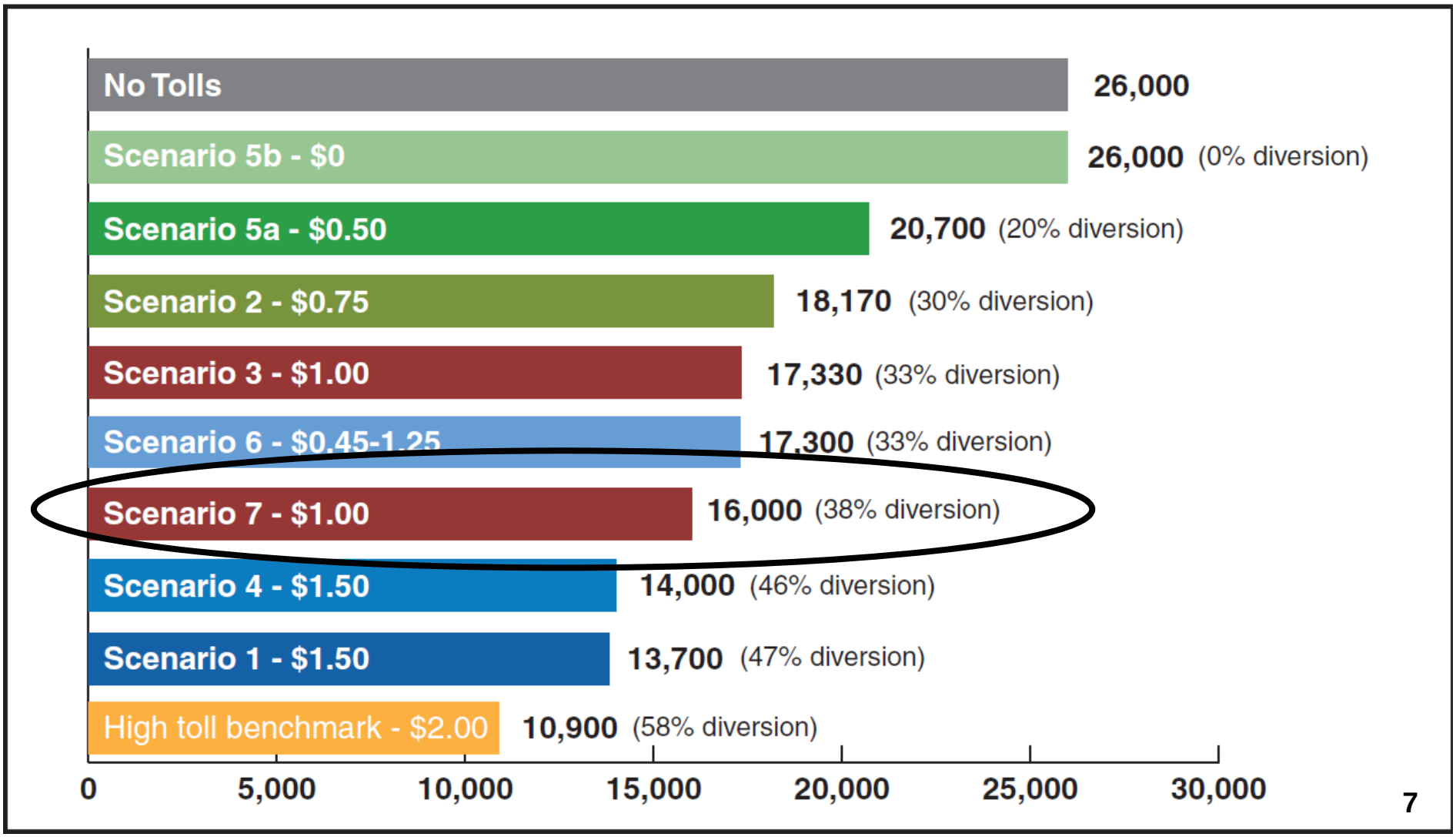
	High Toll Benchmark	Scenario							
		1	2	3	4	5a	5b	6	7
Revenue collected from tolls*	$1,340	$1,220	$770	$980	$1,270	$600	$610	$1,260	$1,085
Toll collection costs**	($280)	($300)	($260)	($260)	($320)	($280)	($160)	($360)	($350)
Revenues after collection costs	$1,060	$920	$510	$720	$950	$320	$450	$900	$735

Numbers represent estimates for approximately 30 years. Costs in millions of dollars.
**After adjustments for fees, credits and uncollectible accounts. Scenarios 5a, 5b, and 7 assume 1.3 percent toll rate escalation.*
***Includes credit card fees and customer service center, state operations and roadway toll system costs. Could be lower with additional operational toll facilities.*

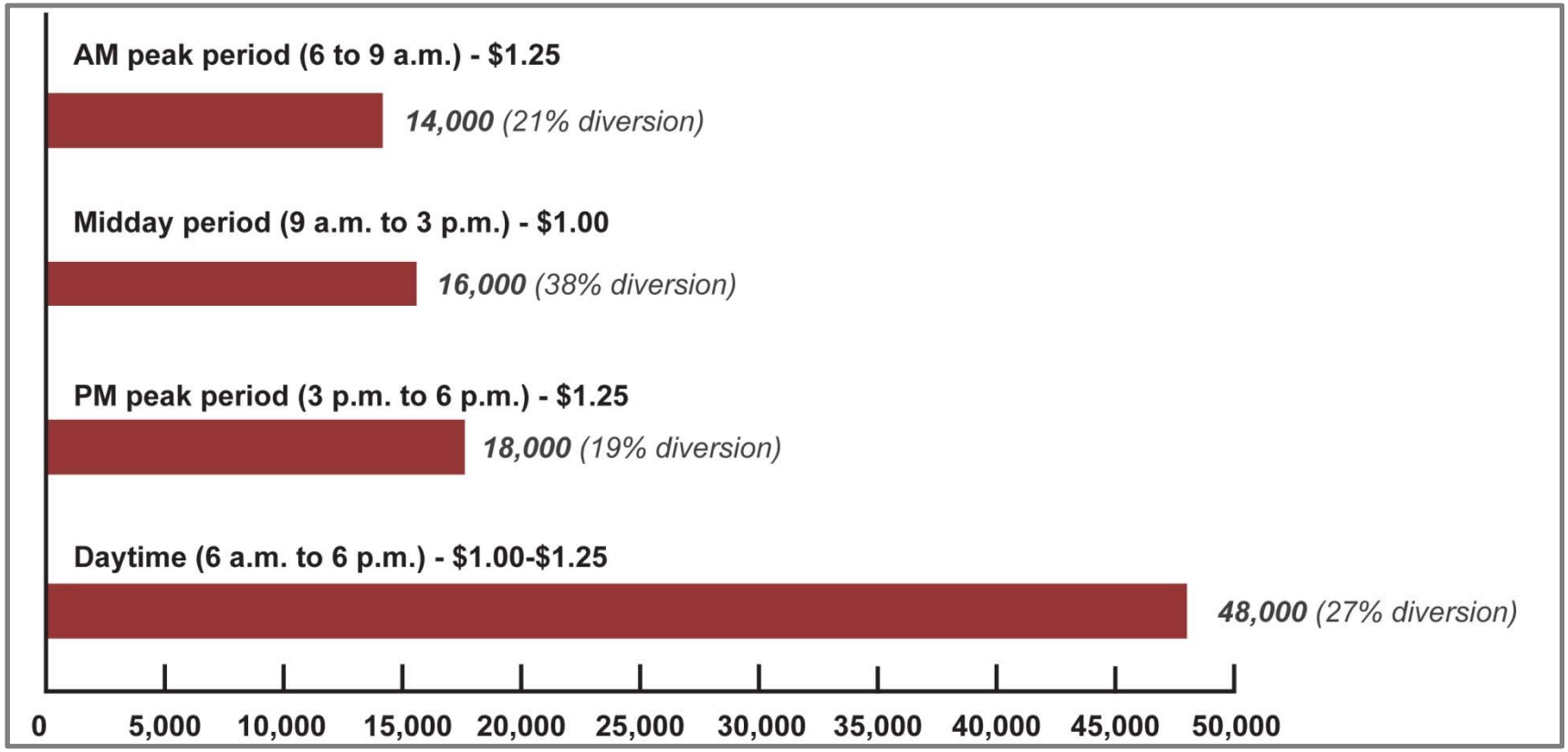
Tunnel Volumes – PM Peak Period 3 – 6 p.m.



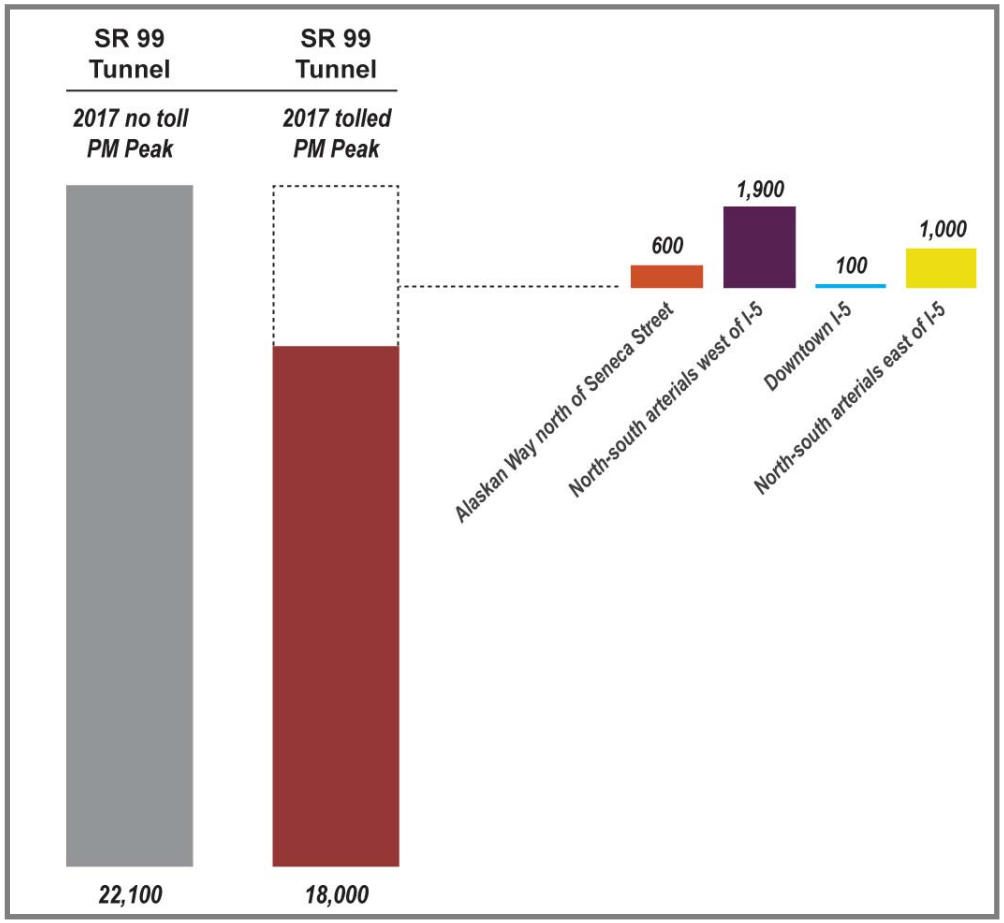
Tunnel Volumes – Midday Period 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.



Tunnel Volumes for Scenario 7



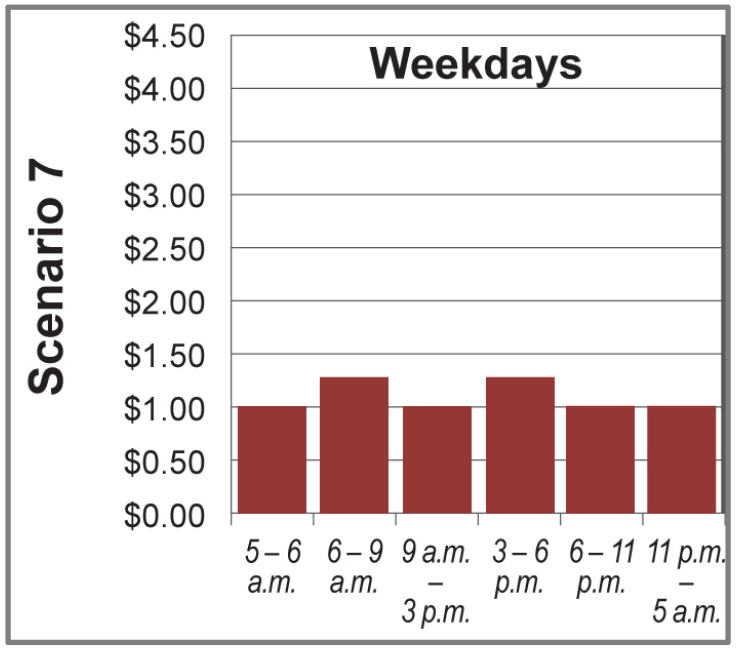
Traffic Volumes by Location – Scenario 7
PM Peak Period 3 – 6 p.m.



**Alaskan Way volumes not included in arterials west of I-5.*
All volumes taken at Seneca Street.

Recommendation #1: Strategy for Tolling the SR 99 Tunnel and Minimizing Traffic Diversion

- Toll rate structure like Scenario 7:
  - Strikes balance between minimizing traffic diversion and raising revenue.
  - Includes 1.3 percent annual toll rate escalation.
  - Uses per-axle toll multiplier for freight.
  - Consider lowering midday rate to $.75 and extending afternoon/evening peak period to 7 p.m. to lower midday diversion and rebalance revenue.



Recommendation #1: Strategy for Tolling the SR 99 Tunnel and Minimizing Traffic Diversion

- 20 percent peak period diversion in Scenario 7 = approx. 3,500 cars on north-south arterials.
  - Equivalent volume of cars traveling on three-lane street over three-hour period of time.
  - Higher levels of diversion cause impacts that may not be feasible to mitigate.
- Establish tunnel utilization goal:
  - At least 80 percent during peak periods.
  - At least 70 percent during daytime off-peak periods.
  - Use as guideline for Washington State Transportation Commission toll rate setting process.

Recommendation #2: Strategy for Mitigating Diversion

- The ACTT Committee used the following criteria to evaluate system improvements that could mitigate the effects of diversion.
  - Be flexible and adaptable to a variable transportation system where future travel patterns may be difficult to forecast.
  - Limit the impacts of diversion (increased delays or increased traffic volumes) in and around downtown Seattle.
  - Be easy to implement without requiring interest payments and other costs needed to finance large capital investments.
  - Address safety concerns for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Recommendation #2: Strategy for Mitigating Diversion

- Annual funding for transit service investments should be highest priority to mitigate diversion.
  - Improves reliability of service and encourages use of transit as alternative to driving.
  - Transit investments are pay-as-you-go, can be deployed quickly and have no financing costs.
  - Transit investments were originally envisioned as key component of Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program.
  - Transit ridership increased when Metro added trips to mitigate for south end viaduct replacement work and on SR 520 after tolls implemented.

Recommendation #2: Strategy for Mitigating Diversion

- Other mitigation strategies evaluated are also necessary.
  - Adaptive signal systems could help mitigate for effects of diversion, particularly for freight and pedestrian safety.
  - Mitigation improvements are needed to ensure safe and accessible pedestrian and bicycle routes in neighborhoods near tunnel portals.
- Given limited toll revenue, agencies should identify and aggressively pursue alternate funding sources for other transportation system improvements.

Recommendation #3: Prioritizing Use of Toll Revenue

- Toll revenue should be allocated in the following order:
  1. Toll collection costs (operations and maintenance of toll collection system).
  2. $200 million capital costs (plus financing costs) for the SR 99 tunnel.
  3. Operations and maintenance of SR 99 tunnel.
  4. Annual funding for transit service on SR 99 corridor.
- Given limited toll revenue, SR 99 tunnel repair and rehabilitation, tunnel insurance and additional transportation system improvements to mitigate the effects of diversion should come from other sources.

Recommendation #4: Local Community and Jurisdictional Involvement in Toll Rate Setting Process

- Committee recommends that Washington State Transportation Commission and other policymakers engage ACTT Committee, City of Seattle, King County and Port of Seattle in rate setting process.
- ACTT Committee should continue for two to three years after tolling begins to review effects of tolling during construction on waterfront.
- State and City of Seattle should convene small panel for ongoing oversight of toll rates and diversion beyond 2018.

Recommendation #5: Further Study of Tolling in Puget Sound

- As number of tolled facilities increases, there are opportunities to incorporate efficiencies of scale.
    - Investigate ways to lower toll collection costs and ensure fair and equitable distribution of toll collection costs across the system.
- As more regional facilities are tolled, a systems approach to tolling can help manage congestion, minimize diversion and lower costs.
- Committee recommends regional tolling be studied further.

Next Steps in Toll Rate Setting Process

- Independent investment-grade traffic and revenue analysis led by WSDOT Toll Division.
- WSDOT will seek bond authorization during 2015 legislative session.
- Washington State Transportation Commission will set toll rates before tunnel opens.
    - Will hold public meetings and a final hearing in Seattle before setting toll rates.

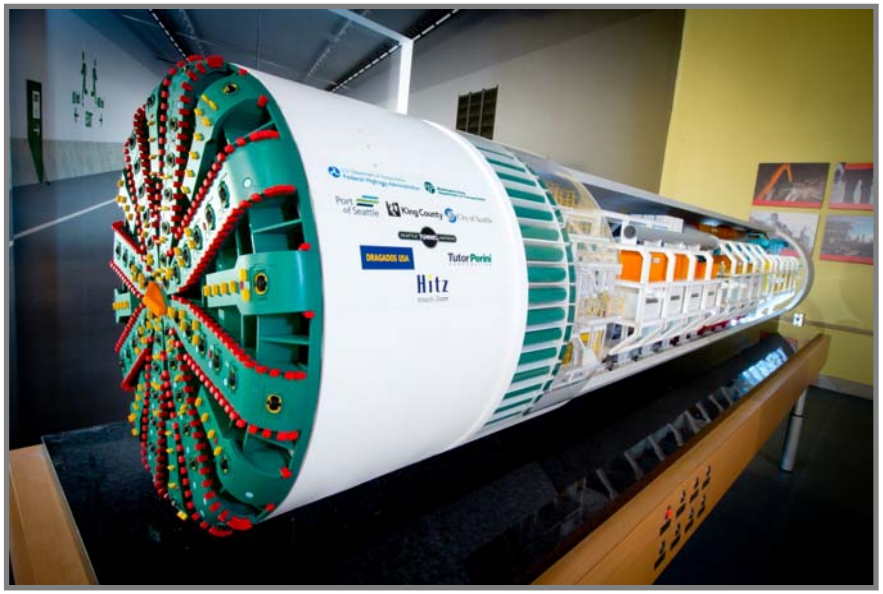
Website:
www.AlaskanWayViaduct.org

Twitter: @BerthaDigsSR99

Email:
viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov

Hotline:
1-888-AWV-LINE

Milepost Thirty-One



Milepost 31 is located at 211 First Ave. S.