

Seattle, WA



## Seattle Urban Mobility Plan, Seattle DOT

Nelson\Nygaard led the Urban Mobility Plan for the City of Seattle, a high-profile project designed to develop a Surface and Transit alternative for the replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. The plan proposed alternatives combining physical improvements and policy changes to optimize the movement of goods and people through the center city. We worked closely with the City to develop a set of goals, objectives and measures to evaluate all alternatives and to identify “measures of success.” We developed a comprehensive plan for evaluating alternatives, including a transparent and inclusive public process. Once a leading alternative was selected, we led a focused public discussion including dissemination of information through in-person meetings and through the development of a “briefing book” with existing conditions information, fact sheets and peer city research tied to the goals of the project.

Part of our research to support the public process was a compilation of highway removal case studies. We looked at the removal of obsolete highway infrastructure in San Francisco, Milwaukee, Portland, and Seoul, Korea. Our research found that the removal of central, elevated highway structures reduced the number of auto trips in these cities, and did not require a major shift to transit. We found that “spillover” traffic was absorbed by the rest of the traffic system. In fact, freeway removal had a catalytic effect on development in these cities; but the projects were part of a larger strategy, and were very carefully designed. The building blocks of the Seattle Urban Mobility Plan, for instance, were surface street improvements, transit investment, development of an at-grade replacement boulevard, transportation demand management policies, and a Transportation System Management (TSM).



**Project Duration:** 2007–2008

**Total Budget:** \$935,000

**Nelson Nygaard Budget:** \$500,000

**For more information:**

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