

Online Comment by User: Sydney McComas

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Address: , , 98122
Comment:

October 30, 2006

Mr. Douglas MacDonald, Secretary of Transportation
Washington State Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 47316
Olympia WA 98504-7316

Dear Mr. MacDonald,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the SR 520 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Futurewise is a statewide citizens' group that works to protect working farms and forests for this and future generations, while making cities and towns great places to live. We have members across Washington State, as well as in the Puget Sound region.

We appreciate your hard work on this issue. As you craft this package, we urge you to consider and emphasize the following priorities.

I-0916-001

Mobility

Any alternative should aggressively maximize the use of transit, active traffic management, congestion pricing and Transportation Demand Management to move people through the 520 corridor.

- The 520 replacement should be built to accommodate future high capacity transit:
 - o Pontoons should be constructed to accommodate possible future light rail connections.
 - o Height/grade of the 520 facility should accommodate possible future light rail connections
 - o The 520 facility should be built to accommodate possible future light rail into the proposed four or six lane footprint

I-0916-002

- A 520 Corridor Transportation Demand Management Agreement should be developed with the adjacent 520 cities and major employers to work together to decrease SOV use in the corridor.

I-0916-003

- WSDOT should provide supplemental information on the 4-lane alternative that includes the provision of transit and HOV lanes on local arterials, a corridor design that maximizes transit use and the effects of new regional transit and light rail investments.
 - o A four-lane option with congestion-pricing should be studied.

I-0916-001

Comment Summary:

Light Rail Transit

Response:

See Section 2.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-002

Comment Summary:

Regional Land Use and Transportation Planning

Response:

See Section 2.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-003

Comment Summary:

4-Lane Alternative

Response:

See Section 2.0 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WSDOT should provide supplemental information on another 4-lane option that includes a “congestion-pricing” toll that ensures free flow at rush hour for a four-lane option, to provide incentives to reduce SOV use and increase the use Transit/HOVs.
I-0916-004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We urge studying tolling on the I-90 bridge to reduce diversion of SR 520 users to another close-by Cross-Lake facility as well as the effect of system-wide tolling on 520 Bridge throughput.
I-0916-005	Select the alternative that most supports good land-use. The SR 520 Bridge replacement project is an excellent opportunity to further implement the region's growth and transportation strategy done under the state's Growth Management Act. This strategy emphasizes providing multi-modal connections between and within the region's urban centers.
I-0916-006	The selected alternative should provide great regional and local bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.
I-0916-007	<p>Financing</p> <p>The region should contribute significantly to financing the 520 project through the Regional Transportation Investment District within its current taxing authority.</p> <p>Tolls should be imposed now to start generating revenue for the project.</p>
I-0916-008	<p>Protection of the Natural Environment</p> <p>Reductions in global warming emissions. Climate change is no longer the subject of debate; rather, it is our most urgent environmental and social challenge. In our region, transportation is the single greatest source of global warming emissions. Supplemental information should be provided to show how we can achieve a net reduction in global warming emissions for each alternative over a 2006 baseline.</p>
I-0916-009	<p>Provide adequate mitigation for impacts on plant and animal populations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be an inventory of plant and animal populations and mitigation should be made in light of this ecological assessment. There should be a net gain in vegetation, especially trees, and no net loss in wildlife and fish based on the inventories noted above. This is an opportunity to address habitat and breeding areas, and possibly improve fish passage and other habitats.
I-0916-010	<p>Protection of Human Health</p> <p>Provide appropriate mitigation for impacts on human health. Specifically, the chosen alternative should ensure:</p>

I-0916-004

Comment Summary:

Tolling Scenarios, Pricing, and Revenue

Response:

See Section 3.3 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-005

Comment Summary:

Plans and Policies

Response:

See Section 6.3 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-006

Comment Summary:

Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Response:

See Section 2.3 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-007

Comment Summary:

Funding

Response:

See Section 3.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-008

Comment Summary:

Energy and Greenhouse Gases

I-0916-010

- Noise – There should be no increase in noise levels and those noise levels should comply with King County code Chapter 12.88, Seattle and Bellevue codes or be mitigated, unless waived by the community.

I-0916-011

- Air quality – There should be no decrease in air quality from a new bridge or from bridge construction.

I-0916-012

- Water Quality - There should be no decrease in water quality from a new bridge or from bridge construction. Water quality includes water quantity, stormwater, spill containment and wetlands.

I-0916-013

- Health Impact Assessment should be made for the alternative chosen. Health impact assessment (HIA) is commonly defined as “a combination of procedures, methods, and tools by which a policy, program, or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population.”

I-0916-014

Lid options should be studied and presented to the community for all alternatives.

I-0916-015

Protection of the Arboretum and Open Space

Any alternative should protect the Arboretum and open space. A feasible and prudent option ensures there will be:

- No net loss of publicly held parkland, open space or impairment to the plant collection and wildlife in the Arboretum.
- A limited increase of traffic traveling east/west through the Arboretum's wetlands.

I-0916-016

Reduction of the Alternative Footprints

The footprint of each of the six-lane options should be reduced. Options should be considered that drastically limit the existing footprint including:

- Two-lane, bus and HOV-only Pacific interchange. This supports UW’s neighborhood commitment to grow without increasing SOV trips.
- Reduce shoulder widths and lane widths and consider reducing design speed and vehicle speed on the bridge to ensure safety on narrower lanes as well as maximizing throughput.
- As mentioned in the above mobility section, possible future light rail should be accommodated in the proposed four-lane or six-lane footprint.

Thank you very much for considering these comments as you move forward with this project. Please feel free to contact me at (206)343-0681 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sydney McComas

Response:

See Section 14.0 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-009

Comment Summary:

Fish and Wildlife (Mitigation)

Response:

See Section 16.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-010

Comment Summary:

Noise (Methodology)

Response:

See Section 12.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-011

Comment Summary:

Air Quality Analysis

Response:

See Section 13.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-012

Comment Summary:

Water Resource Effects During Operation

Response:

See Section 15.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-013

Comment Summary:

Health Impact Assessment

Response:

See Section 7.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-014

Comment Summary:

Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Response:

See Section 2.3 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-015

Comment Summary:

Section 4(f)

Response:

See Section 21 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-0916-016

Comment Summary:

6-Lane Alternative

Response:

See Section 1.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.