

I-1062-001**Comment Summary:**

Alternatives Development

Response:

See Section 1.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

From: MarkTii@aol.com
To: [SR 520 DEIS Comments](#)
CC:
Subject: Comment on 520 DEIS, opposition to 6 lane proposals and other matters
Date: Tuesday, October 31, 2006 7:29:45 PM
Attachments:

I-1062-001 | I have lived in my home in the Roanoke Park/Portage Bay neighborhood of Seattle for 22 years. I used to live in Kirkland while attending the University of Washington, so I have first hand experience with the commute across 520 also. (Believe me, it was bad in the 1970s and early 1980s too).

I am very concerned about the adverse impact that the current proposals will have upon our neighborhood, Seattle, and the Eastside communities alongside the path of 520. I am concerned about the impact upon wetlands, fish, fowl, and wildlife populations. I am very concerned about all of the proposals larger than 4 lanes. Further, from what was presented at the meetings that I was able to attend, the 6 lane proposals are in reality 8 lane or larger proposals because of the current requirements for shoulders, "emergency" lanes, and bus acceleration/merge lanes. Even the current 4 lane proposals are too big, given the current highway construction design criteria.

Worse, In many ways, the 6 lane Pacific Street Interchange proposal is simply the RH Thompson Expressway risen from the dead.

Seattle fought the RH Thompson Expressway and we can only thank those residents who stood up to the pressures to build that highway. I cannot believe that we are again facing similar choices, with such limited options.

I would hope that Governor Gregoire and the State Department of Transportation reconsider the proposals.

In many ways, the Draft EIS has shown itself to be woefully inadequate -- especially in its global failure to seriously consider aggressive peak-load or congestion pricing (tolls shouldn't be used simply to raise project funds), the environmental impacts, and the impacts upon surface streets and I-5 within Seattle. I also do not understand the shortshrift given tunnel options.

I-1062-002 | It is also troubling that many of the public meetings were set on very short notice.
I also don't understand the apparent interest in making a decision so soon.

I-1062-003 | Before considering the current proposals, I believe that the WSDOT should first consider instituting aggressive congestion pricing tolls and see how rush hour traffic is affected -- in terms of getting people out of single occupancy vehicles, changing travel patterns, shifting trips to different times of the day, and encouraging people to live near where they work. All of these are laudable goals and warrant careful review.

I-1062-004 | I also note that the current Draft EIS suggests that income redistribution effects of congestion pricing would be both significant and socially unacceptable such that the effects would swamp any proposed benefit (which clearly might not be true). What benefit is met by having people, of all income levels, sit and waste time in traffic jams? It should be obvious (but to many it isn't) that time is the one resource that cannot be recaptured or recycled. The same sort of logic would lead one to the conclusion that all public utilities (such as electricity) should be priced simply to cover costs with no consideration given to limiting excess demand and promoting conservation. Further, if one is truly concerned that income redistribution effects would be significant, several public sector economists have suggested mechanisms to return supposed "excess receipts" back to low income groups through a variety of alternative programs. Professor Halvorsen (now chair) of the Department of Economics at the University of Washington is an economist who has explored such issues with respect to public services such as electrical utility pricing models. I was especially disappointed that the sections dealing with the impact of tolling did not appear to have been written by economists. Perhaps the sections were originally written by economists but were later eviscerated by editors?

Aggressive congestion pricing would likely eliminate much of the need for expanding 520. And, without pursuing congestion pricing, we will likely find ourselves dealing with the very same congestion problems within 10 to 15 years after completion of ANY proposed expansion of 520.

In summary, I can only hope that the WSDOT will carefully review and address the inadequacies of the Draft EIS and resist the WSDOT's natural tendency to build and build and build again.

Respectfully,

I-1062-002

Comment Summary:

Coordination with Other Transportation Projects

Response:

See Section 1.0 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-1062-003

Comment Summary:

Early Tolling

Response:

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

I-1062-004

Comment Summary:

Tolling Scenarios, Pricing, and Revenue

Response:

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

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From: MarkTii@aol.com
To: [SR 520 DEIS Comments](#);
CC:
Subject: A further note: Agenda control in the DEIS process
Date: Tuesday, October 31, 2006 10:09:00 PM
Attachments:

I-1062-005 | I have just been informed by a knowledgeable source, that there was an individual in a supervisory capacity who was selectively editing the drafts provided by writers and other consultants on the DEIS to reflect a pro-build view, apparently shared by the WSDOT. If true, that is very unfortunate, but certainly not surprising.

Mark Nerheim

I-1062-005

Comment Summary:

Format and Content

Response:

See Section 23.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.