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**Subject:** SR 520 DEIS Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 31, 2006 3:40:51 PM  
**Attachments:**

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**I-1075-001** | I am writing to express my deep concerns about the proposals under review for massively expanding SR 520 as described in the DEIS and to ask you, WA State DOT, to develop a four lane proposal that does not do irreparable damage to Washington Park Arboretum, as all current proposals do, particularly the so-called Pacific Street interchange a name with a hollow, bitter irony as it bears no relationship to anything 'pacific'.

**I-1075-002** | As you know the EIS process was developed to allow the public to voice concerns about projects and to require proposing agencies to consider their concerns and respond to them substantively. As currently practiced, the process fails to respond to its mandate. It consists of taking letters received from the public, dissecting them into EIS 'categories' and providing predetermined, stock 'answers' which are merely 'responses' that purport to address and explain why the questions and issues raised are irrelevant, impossible or otherwise not worthy of consideration by the agency. For this reason I write under a heading that you will search in vain for in the EIS process--the POETICS OF LIFE. I do so to ask you to respond substantively rather than with stock negations-masquerading-as-answers to the concerns I raise. I look forward to your substantive responses addressing these concerns.

**I-1075-003** | If one considers life, and its diverse expressions, to be this planet's most valuable asset--which, I submit, is a hard proposition to refute, then Washington Park Arboretum is one of the State's most important institutions. Indeed, Washington Park Arboretum contains an

**I-1075-001**

**Comment Summary:**

4-Lane Alternative

**Response:**

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

**I-1075-002**

**Comment Summary:**

Coordination with Other Transportation Projects

**Response:**

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

**I-1075-003**

**Comment Summary:**

Arboretum (Concerns)

**Response:**

See Section 9.3 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

- I-1075-003** | internationally important collection of living plants that make it a premier state institution and a nationally and internationally significant one. These are living values of fundamental importance to our future and our survival. By contrast, 'impervious cover', whether of the concrete or asphalt persuasion, is dead surfacing that covers a living planet. We are therefore discussing the merits of life vs. death as we consider this project. Let us limit and minimize death-by-paving. Let us put life and living plants--and the experience of them in settings not despoiled by traffic--ahead of expanding paving to accommodate ever more egregiously-huge, faster-moving, declining-fossil-fuel-powered, private vehicles. Considering such vehicles, let us call a tank a tank, and let us also call an empty tank a call to reconsider the construction of facilities to assist movement by fossil fuel powered private vehicles.
- I-1075-004** | Let us also be honest about the project we purport to assess. The 'six lane' alternative which is approximately three times wider than the current 4 lane road, is, in reality, an 8 lane road waiting to happen. Built to 'required federal standards' that no sections of Interstate 5 through downtown Seattle meet, this road will inevitably become an 8 lane, or larger, road. Let us do the math and honestly and forthrightly describe the project alternatives by their real size in the EIS so that we may assess their impacts accordingly.
- I-1075-005** | Let us also be honest about the effects of disgorging increasing quantities traffic onto Lake Washington Boulevard. In effect, the Pacific Street interchange and ramps into Washington Park Arboretum will render Lake Washington Boulevard into a born-again R H Thompson Expressway. The EIS should therefore acknowledge and name this winding, 2-lane road, designed to accommodate traffic at speeds such as 20-30 mph, appropriately as the Lake Washington Expressway. Describing it in this more accurate way will provide citizens of Puget Sound with a clearer understanding of what the project actually is and what it will do to our environment.
- I-1075-006** | The expansion of SR 520 is an exercise in facilitating global warming. It does so by aiding and abetting movement that relies on oil-powered transportation, primarily in individual private vehicles--more paving for this mode of transit than other modes of transit. The expansion of SR 520 destroys irreplaceable wetland functions and by increasing traffic on the Boulevard by approximately 50% renders a large swathe of Washington Park Arboretum unusable for any park or arboretum functions.

**I-1075-004**

**Comment Summary:**

6-Lane Alternative

**Response:**

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

**I-1075-005**

**Comment Summary:**

Pacific Street Interchange Option

**Response:**

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

**I-1075-006**

**Comment Summary:**

Arboretum (Concerns)

**Response:**

See Section 9.3 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

**I-1075-006** | The assessment of the SR 520 project is therefore, at its core, an issue of whether we value life and a living planet surface more than the purported 'convenience' of dead paving. I write to ask you to reject all alternatives that increase paving of the SR 520 bridge and road; reject, completely and absolutely, the massive, elevated paving associated with the 'Pacific' Interchange; and in particular reject all ramps disgorging and debouching a perpetual torrent of traffic onto Lake Washington Boulevard.

Sincerely,

Iain M Robertson, Landscape Architect

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