

From: [Laura Bloch](#)
To: [SR 520 DEIS Comments](#);
CC:
Subject: SR 520 Comments
Date: Tuesday, October 31, 2006 9:14:27 PM
Attachments: [SR520 Comments.doc](#)

Mr. Paul Krueger –

Please find my comments in the attached document and also repeated in the text of this email below.

Sincerely,

Laura Bloch
10428 NE 28th Pl
Bellevue, WA 98004

Mr. Paul Krueger:

Please find below my comments below on the Draft EIS for the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project.

Sincerely,

Laura Bloch
10428 NE 28th Pl
Bellevue, WA 98004

Comments:

Transit

I-1247-001 Maintaining a form of ‘flyer’ or transfer stop at or near the Evergreen Point Freeway Station is critical to providing effective bus transit to Eastside locations. This is the only site on the freeway that has existing park and ride facilities and access to all busses traveling on the SR 520 corridor. Bus passengers with monthly or annual bus passes frequently use this site to transfer among busses to coordinate the most rapid route to their destination. Removing this option would increase travel times for transit users working or living in Eastside communities.

Parking spaces taken for construction of a replacement bridge at the Evergreen Point Park and Ride should be replaced.

Neither of the South Kirkland Park-and-Ride Transit Access proposals (108th Ave NE option nor Bellevue Way option) appear to solve either existing or projected problems accessing the South Kirkland Park and Ride Park-and-Ride.

I-1247-001
Comment Summary:
Eastside Concerns

Response:
See Section 24.0 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-1247-002

Comment Summary:

Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Response:

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

I-1247-001 The Bellevue Way option appears to eliminate the only direct access that vehicles driving north along Bellevue Way have to SR520 by routing traffic onto, or nearly onto Northrup Way rather than using the existing (or slightly modified) on-ramps to west-bound SR 520. The benefits from this proposal are unclear and such a redesign appears unwarranted and unnecessary.

The 108th Ave NE option appears to provide a preferable approach to managing transit in this area if one of these two alternatives is to be selected.

Pedestrian facilities

The text (page 3-31) suggests that the Bellevue Way interchange would be similar to the bridge and interchange that exists today. This bridge and interchange currently creates unacceptable risks to pedestrians and bicyclists that should be remedied in any rebuild of this bridge.

Pedestrians are forced to travel on the west side of the bridge and cross the off-ramp from East-bound travel lanes as well as the on-ramp to West-bound travel lanes. The sidewalk on the existing bridge also exposes pedestrians directly to the traffic traveling on Bellevue Way. It is likely that this bridge carries more pedestrian traffic than other areas proposed for lids or other such 'connectivity' mechanisms. This is an important corridor for pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly on summer weekdays and weekends when pedestrians access the running trail along Lake Washington Blvd, and in the future will access the bicycle/running trail on the north side of SR 520. Recreational bicyclists also frequently use Bellevue Way as a route to access quiet streets in West Bellevue, Medina and Clyde Hill. When this bridge is replaced it should be wider than the existing bridge including both grade separation and physical barriers between pedestrians and traffic. Furthermore, pedestrian crossings of on-ramps and off-ramps should be critically reviewed to see if safer alternatives can be found. Perhaps a lid should be considered at this location that would connect the communities of North Bellevue with South Kirkland.

While pedestrian facilities connecting trails and residents should be a central component of any transit planning, the pedestrian overpass between 84th Ave NE and Evergreen Point Rd does not currently get much use due to a couple of critical short-comings. First, the south side access point launches from the parking lot of a school and is not visible from public streets or marked trails. Second, the north-side of this trail entails traveling down a fairly tall set of stairs. These two components make me question the utility of this overpass when the Points loop trail currently passes along Evergreen Point Rd where a traffic lid is proposed. This lid should emphasize connectivity with the park while encouraging pedestrians to use the existing and proposed trail. Unless the overpass becomes more clearly marked and publicly accessible at the south side and the northside connection becomes a gentler connection (e.g., no stairs) to the proposed trails, the project should consider eliminating this pedestrian crossing.

I-1247-002 I am excited to have a bicycle/pedestrian path along the bridge. Such a facility will be widely appreciated and used by recreational users as well as commuters. Consideration should be made to providing a bathroom facility at the eastern terminus of the bridge in the vicinity of the Evergreen Point lid. Such facilities currently exist in public parks in the western portion of the project area, but are absent in this area. Furthermore, the path along the bridge corridor should

I-1247-002 consider creating several areas where pedestrians can step out of the travel path for rest or for passing and where slower or uncertain bicyclist may allow passing.

I-1247-003 The bicycle/Pedestrian path along the eastern portion of the project area is a good component of the project and I strongly endorse the “path to the north option” which provides a simpler path that will maximize its use by the community and through commuters. However, it is unclear how the proposed bicycle trail transitions through the 84th Ave NE and 92nd Ave NE ramps. Optimally the trail and the traffic ramp would be grade separated. Furthermore, it is unclear why the ramp stops at its proposed eastern terminus. This bicycle/pedestrian facility should be continued as a grade-separated, ramped trail running east to Northup Way and NE 24th St intersection. Currently there is no safe, continuous means for bicycles nor pedestrians to travel along Northup Way between Lake Washington Blvd and NE 24th St.

I-1247-004 Connecting the bicycle/pedestrian facilities serving the eastside communities to the Burke-Gilman trail in the vicinity of University of Washington is an important goal. However, if grades are excessive such a trail will fail. If the Pacific Interchange Option is selected the bicycle and pedestrian facilities may be better served by traveling a route that does not include such steep grades.

Construction Impacts

I-1247-005 Construction timing should ensure that disruptions to eastside communities are offset from disruptions associated with anticipated construction along the I 405 corridor.

I-1247-006 Traffic mitigation during construction should include provision for increased transit connections between eastside communities and Seattle via the SR 520 corridor.

Tolling

I-1247-007 Provide the costs, user fees appear appropriate, however provision should be made to prevent the use of Bellevue Way and similar local roads as a means to transfer from SR 520 to I 90 or SR 522.

Automated tolls sound like an excellent concept, but tolling must make provisions for occasional users. There is a danger that tolling via automated only mechanisms may prevent non-local users from using the roadway.

Peak and non-peak tolling should be considered to continue promoting efficient transportation patterns within the region. Some people will likely be adverse to tolling and may shift their traffic patterns to travel non-optimal routes such as I 90 or SR 522 to their destinations. Regional tolling that includes these routes should be considered to avoid excessive driving patterns and reduce waste of fuels and unnecessary congestion.

Errata

I-1247-003

Comment Summary:

Eastside Concerns

Response:

See Section 24.0 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-1247-004

Comment Summary:

Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Response:

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

I-1247-005

Comment Summary:

Eastside Concerns

Response:

See Section 24.0 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-1247-006

Comment Summary:

Traffic Management (Construction)

Response:

See Section 4.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

I-1247-007

Comment Summary:

Tolling Scenarios, Pricing, and Revenue

I-1247-008 Resolving evening traffic congestion at Lake Washington Blvd NE and Northup Way should be a critical focus. Congestion at this intersection is currently forcing unwanted traffic to travel south along 108th Ave NE before cutting back to the west on NE 24th. Furthermore, vehicles in this vicinity (principally those traveling westbound on Northup) currently perform a variety of illegal and/or dangerous maneuvers to gain access to the SR 520 westbound onramp.

Page 7-10: A passage discussing the Evergreen Point Freeway Station suggests that “Most of the riders using this freeway station are transferring between I-405 and SR 520 bus service.” While this statement is unreferenced, there is also a significant amount of transit transfer between passengers reaching this point from either the University District or Downtown Seattle and points east as well as vice versa.

Page 7-11: The parking at the Evergreen Point Park-and-Ride is referred to as having an average use rate of 88 percent. Based on recent, personal observations the use rate at this facility is currently exceeding capacity during the academic school year and is running slightly below capacity during school holidays. During September and October 2006 the lot exceeds capacity by 8:00 am on business days. Unlike many park and ride locations this lot is a terminal location, and taking the freeway or traveling to an alternative park and ride location entails a ‘penalty’ of at least 5 minutes drive time. Therefore use of this location likely understates actual demand because the penalty for arriving at the lot after it has filled is quite high.

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Response:

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

I-1247-008

Comment Summary:

Eastside Concerns

Response:

See Section 24.0 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.