

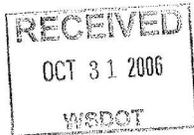


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Joyce Olson
Chief Executive Officer

October 31, 2006

Mr. Paul Krueger
Environmental Manager
SR 520 Project Office
414 Olive Way, Suite 400
Seattle, WA 98101



Dear Mr. Krueger:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Replacement is clearly warranted for this deteriorating facility to avoid a potential loss of life and economic disruption if the bridge sinks or is taken out of service. Further more, with this project, the opportunity is now there to maximize the person carrying capacity of SR-520 and the connecting corridors.

As this project goes forward, it will be important that the proposals designed to improve vehicle flow do not result in unintended restrictions on transit access or create other barriers to effective transit service. Community Transit agrees that early coordination should take place with the affected transit agencies, so meaningful adjustments can be made to the plan.

Community Transit offers the following comments:

R-003-001

Community Transit supports the six lane alternative. The DEIS (on page 1-5) states more directly that the project is needed because "SR 520 is congested and unreliable and does not encourage maximum transit and HOV use." HOV lanes are needed to meet the project needs as stated in the DEIS. HOV lanes should be a standard element on congested freeways and State arterials with significant transit volumes. A coordinated integrated approach with transit to combine various measures (including tolls, speed advantaged transit service, vanpools and other TDM measures) is needed to maximize the person-throughput on this and connecting corridors.

R-003-002

A ramp connection from SR 520 to the I-5 Express Lanes would have a strong a benefit, but the impacts of reducing the lane capacity of the

R-003-001

Comment Summary:

6-Lane Alternative

Response:

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

R-003-002

Comment Summary:

Freeway Operations (I-5 Area)

Response:

See Section 5.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

R-003-002

Express Lanes should be avoided. KC Metro, Sound Transit and Community Transit carry a large number of peak period transit trips on the I-5 Express Lanes. These trips would be adversely affected through delay caused by the loss of a lane due to a new ramp. The result would be a reduction in transit ridership and increased operating costs. Options to provide the ramp without reducing the existing Express Lanes capacity should be strongly considered.

The Montlake Flyer Stop provides a substantial transit benefit. Its elimination would adversely affect transit ridership on the corridor. The design of freeway stations is critical to preserve existing ridership and to facilitate the increased transit ridership assumed in the DEIS.

R-003-003

Construction Impacts. The proposed closing of the existing westbound HOV lane during construction should not be adopted. It is Community Transit's understanding that it is the Project's goal to mitigate some of the construction impacts by encouraging the use of transit and other HOV modes. The closure of the existing HOV facilities on this corridor sends the wrong message to the public and will further degrade transit travel time and result in increased operating costs that may result in a reduction of transit riders. Discussion regarding this proposal should take place with the Transit Agencies before the FEIS is issued.

R-003-004

Construction Mitigation. A collaborative process should be used to develop a program of construction mitigation measures, consistent with provisions of HB 2871. Community Transit recommends the development of a construction mitigation program that defines the mitigation program goals and then tailors the program to meet these goals. Based on the DEIS, transit is expected to provide a substantial portion of the person trips through this corridor after completion. The construction mitigation program is the best time to shift to transit by putting in place the key elements necessary for success. Consideration should be given to transit priority on the corridor and through the construction zones, the implementation of tolls and increased transit service levels.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment on the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project. If you have any questions feel free to contact me at 425 348-7149 or email me at tim.brakke@commtrans.org.

Sincerely,



Tim Brakke
Manager of Service & Facilities Development

Cc: Joy Munkers, Director of Planning & Development

R-003-003

Comment Summary:

Traffic Management (Construction)

Response:

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

R-003-004

Comment Summary:

Traffic Management (Construction)

Response:

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