

MONTLAKE COMMUNITY CLUB

"Working together to maintain and nurture the natural environment and history of the Montlake neighborhood"

October 14, 2006

VIA E-MAIL AND U.S. MAIL

John Milton, Project Director
Washington State Department of Transportation
SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project
414 Olive Way, Suite 400
Seattle, Washington 98101-1209

Re: Montlake Community Club Comment – SR 520 Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Milton:

I am writing on behalf of the Montlake Community Club regarding the SR 520 Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Representing over 1300 household and business members, the Montlake Community Club strongly supports the adoption of the Pacific Interchange / BetterBridge alternative as the preferred alternative for the replacement of SR 520.

C-009-001 On September 14, 2005, the Montlake Community Club unanimously passed a resolution enthusiastically supporting the Pacific Interchange option for SR 520 and vigorously opposing the other 6 lane alternatives.

Since passage of that resolution, SR 520 has been discussed at every Board and general meeting Montlake Community Club has held, as well as in the Montlake Flyer, the monthly publication of the Montlake Community Club. Support for Pacific Interchange in these open forums has been unwavering and strong. Additionally, I have had at least 100 private discussions with residents of Montlake about the replacement of SR 520, in which support for Pacific Interchange has been equally strong.

The case for the Pacific Interchange is compelling from both a local and a regional perspective:

- The Pacific Interchange is the only alternative that allows direct and reliable transit connections between SR 520 and Sound Transit's North Link Light Rail station at Husky Stadium. Taxpayers have a right to expect these multi-billion dollar transportation projects to connect.
- The Pacific Interchange is the only alternative that improves, rather than worsens, the flow of local traffic on Seattle streets, particularly traffic north of the Montlake Cut.
- The Pacific Interchange minimizes the negative impacts on all the Seattle neighborhoods through which SR 520 passes, including Montlake, Portage Bay / Roanoke Park, and North Capitol Hill, and maximizes the enhancements to these neighborhoods. These enhancements include new trails and parklands that are contiguous to the Arboretum and benefit the entire region.

Montlake Community Club letter to WSDOT regarding SR 520 Draft Environmental Statement

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C-009-001

Comment Summary:

Pacific Street Interchange Option

Response:

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

C-009-001 • The Pacific Interchange is the only alternative that holds the potential for restoration of bus service to Northeast Seattle / SR 513 [see Metro letter dated July 27, 2006].

C-009-002 The "base 6 lane" alternative under consideration fails to achieve the critical goals of improving transit connectivity and local traffic flow through the SR 520 corridor, and has numerous unacceptable impacts:

- Even the smallest of the interchanges proposed for Montlake is completely out of scale with the neighborhood. Due to the topography and the location of access ramps, there is no configuration for a lid over this interchange that would mitigate these impacts for the Montlake community.
- The base 6 lane alternative is projected to worsen congestion on arterial streets that provide access to SR 520.
- Under the base 6 lane alternative, the Portage Bay viaduct would need to be widened to 8 or 9 lanes. This would have significant negative impact on wetlands, parkland, and homes and businesses in the Portage Bay, Roanoke Park, and North Capitol Hill neighborhoods.

C-009-003 Many Montlake residents are employed by or affiliated with the University of Washington. They are some of the Pacific Interchange's best informed and most enthusiastic supporters. The University will significantly expand in the coming decades, placing substantial additional demands upon surrounding neighborhoods and on the transportation network. Pacific Interchange is the only alternative with the potential to provide the transportation infrastructure needed to responsibly handle the UW's growth. We are hopeful the University will participate constructively in the planning process.

Many members of the Montlake Community Club are especially sensitive to the impacts any of the alternatives might have on the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. Our members have made clear that while they strongly support the Pacific Interchange, they will demand that all efforts be made to minimize and / or mitigate Arboretum impacts.

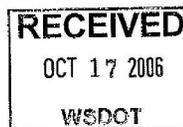
In summary, the 1300 household and business members of the Montlake Community Club overwhelmingly support the Pacific Interchange as the preferred replacement for SR 520.

Please contact me with any questions or comments.

Sincerely, 

Robert Rosencrantz
President, Montlake Community Club
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Seattle, Washington 98112
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cc: Montlake Community Club Board of Trustees
cc: Mr. Paul Krueger, Environmental Manager, SR 520 Project, WSDOT



Montlake Community Club letter to WSDOT regarding SR 520 Draft Environmental Statement

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C-009-002

Comment Summary:

6-Lane Alternative

Response:

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

C-009-003

Comment Summary:

Pacific Street Interchange Option

Response:

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