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

Re: SR 520 DEIS RESPONSE FROM TRANSPORTATION CHOICES COALITION

Dear Mr. Krueger;

On behalf Transportation Choices Coalition, I appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on the 520 Bridge Replacement Project. The 520 corridor is a unique and regionally significant resource in terms of natural environment, community character, and economic opportunity. As an overarching theme, I urge you to take the utmost care in integrating land-use considerations, human and environmental health, and high-quality community design into this project.

In particular, I would like to highlight the challenge we face with climate change. Climate change is no longer a topic of debate; rather, it is our most urgent environmental and social challenge. In Washington transportation is the single largest source of global warming emissions and we therefore cannot afford to build a 520 replacement with a business-as-usual mentality.

The effort to replace the SR 520 Bridge is a singular opportunity to move beyond the status quo – indeed, we must if we want to design a bridge that takes into account climate change, neighborhood disruption, environmental stewardship, and mobility in the face of major population growth.

Please take the following comments into consideration:

Mobility

C-027-001 Any alternative should aggressively maximize the use of transit, active traffic management, congestion pricing and Transportation Demand Management to move people through the 520 corridor.

- WSDOT should provide supplemental information on the 4-lane alternative that includes the provision of transit and HOV lanes on local arterials, a corridor design that maximizes transit use, and the effects of new regional transit and light rail investments.
- The 520 replacement should be built to accommodate future high capacity transit:
 - Pontoons should be constructed to accommodate possible future light rail connections.
 - Height/grade of the 520 facility should accommodate possible future light rail connections
 - The 520 facility should be built to accommodate possible future light rail into the proposed four or six lane footprint
- A 520 Corridor Transportation Demand Management Agreement should be developed with the adjacent 520 cities and major employers to work together to decrease SOV use in the corridor.

C-027-002 A four-lane option with congestion-pricing should be studied.

- WSDOT should provide supplemental information on another 4-lane option that includes a "congestion-pricing" toll that ensures free flow at rush hour for a four-lane option, to provide incentives to reduce SOV use and increase the use Transit/HOVs.
- We urge the studying of tolling on the I-90 bridge to reduce diversion of SR 520 users to another close-by Cross-Lake facility as well as the effect of system-wide tolling on 520 Bridge throughput.

The selected alternative should provide great regional and local bicycle and pedestrian connectivity



C-027-001

Comment Summary:

Regional Land Use and Transportation Planning

Response:

See Section 2.1 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-027-002

Comment Summary:

4-Lane Alternative

Response:

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

- C-027-003**
- A chosen alternative should provide connectivity westbound to MOHAI and beyond to Roanoke, north to UW and beyond on Pacific Interchange, south on to 43rd street in Madison Park, and EAST to connect with existing SR520 trail.
 - Connections should be the appropriate height/grade for bicycle and pedestrian use of all levels and abilities.

C-027-004 Protection of human health

Provide appropriate mitigation for impacts on human health. Specifically, the chosen alternative should ensure:

- **Noise** – There should be no increase in noise levels and those noise levels should comply with King County code Chapter 12.88, Seattle and Bellevue codes or be mitigated, unless waived by the community.
- **Air quality** – There should be no decrease in air quality from a new bridge or from bridge construction.
- **Water Quality** - There should be no decrease in water quality from a new bridge or from bridge construction. Water quality includes water quantity, stormwater, spill containment, and wetlands.
- **Health Impact Assessment** be made for the alternative chosen. *Health impact assessment* (HIA) is commonly defined as "a combination of procedures, methods, and tools by which a policy, program, or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population"

C-027-005 Land options should be studied and presented to the community for all alternatives.

C-027-006 Protection of the Arboretum and open space

Any alternative should protect the Arboretum and open space. The alternative selected should not include a Lake Washington Boulevard interchange or an increase in traffic through the Arboretum. In addition, a feasible and prudent option ensures there will be:

- no net loss of publicly held parkland or currently accessible open space in the Arboretum
- no net loss or impairment to the plant collection and wildlife or their future health
- a limited increase of traffic traveling east/west through the Arboretum's wetlands
- no net loss of physical meeting and office facilities for the Arboretum Foundation and the other Arboretum partners' management and maintenance functions
- no net increase to negative intangible conditions (e.g. visual, audio, air quality, light, green space, educational opportunities, or international reputation or significance).

Protection of the natural environment

- C-027-007** **Provide adequate mitigation for impacts on plant and animal populations.** Specifically:
- There should be an inventory of all the plant and animal populations, interactions and behavior patterns. Mitigations should be made in light of this ecological assessment.
 - There should be a net gain in vegetation, especially trees, based on the inventories noted above.
 - There should be no net loss in wildlife and fish based on the inventories noted above. Further, there should be no disruption in habitat migration and breeding areas.

C-027-008 **Select the alternative that most supports good land-use:** The SR520 Bridge replacement project is an excellent opportunity to meet the goals of the Growth Management Act, and selection of the preferred alternative should consider potential impacts and benefits to land use and future development.

C-027-009 **Reductions in global warming emissions.** Supplemental information should be provided to show how we can achieve a net reduction in global warming emissions for each alternative over a 2006 baseline.

C-027-003

Comment Summary:

Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Response:

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

C-027-004

Comment Summary:

Health Impact Assessment

Response:

See Section 7.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-027-005

Comment Summary:

Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Response:

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

C-027-006

Comment Summary:

Arboretum (Concerns)

Response:

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

C-027-007

Comment Summary:

Fish and Wildlife (Mitigation)

C-027-010
Reduction of the footprint of each alternative

The footprint of each of the six-lane options should be drastically reduced. Options should be looked at to drastically limit the existing footprint including:

- Two-lane, bus and HOV-only Pacific interchange. We acknowledge that this severely limits SOV access to the UW but the environmental and aesthetic benefits outweigh this concern. This supports UW's neighborhood commitment to grow without increasing SOV trips.
- Eliminating a Montlake exit/entrance
- Severely reducing shoulder widths and lane widths. WSDOT should consider reducing design speed and vehicle speed on the bridge to ensure safety on narrower lanes as well as maximizing throughput.
- As mentioned in the above mobility section, possible future light rail should be accommodated in the proposed four-lane or six-lane footprint.

C-027-011
Financing

- The region should contribute significantly to financing the 520 project through the Regional Transportation Investment District within its current taxing authority.
- Tolls should be imposed now to start generating revenue for the project.

With this project we have the opportunity to dramatically reshape the direction of transportation and make investments that improve our mobility, health, and quality of life and we appreciate opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Jessyn Schor
Executive Director
Transportation Choices Coalition

Response:

See Section 16.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-027-008

Comment Summary:

Plans and Policies

Response:

See Section 6.3 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-027-009

Comment Summary:

Energy and Greenhouse Gases

Response:

See Section 14.0 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.

C-027-010

Comment Summary:

6-Lane Alternative

Response:

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

C-027-011

Comment Summary:

Funding

Response:

See Section 3.2 of the 2006 Draft EIS Comment Response Report.