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Seattle, WA 98115

September 18, 2006

Paul Krueger
WSDOT Environmental Manager
414 Olive Way, Suite 400
Seattle, WA 98101

Re: 520 Replacement Bridge
Opposition to Pacific Interchange
Reluctant support 6-lane alternative with
High capacity transit

Dear Mr. Krueger:

I-0366-001

I live in the Ravenna and attended a meeting last week about the 520 Bridge. I have since read the DEIS and am urging you to not build the Pacific Interchange. I believe the irreparable environmental impacts to the wetlands, the Arboretum and fish corridor are not justified by the minimal improvements in car mobility (2 minutes across the bridge according to page ES2-5).

It is because of the ability to add high capacity transit that I reluctantly support the 6-lane alternative. However, I believe the Pacific Interchange, while appearing transit friendly, would actually be counterproductive in the long run. In my opinion high capacity transit, not HOV lanes for cars and buses, is the long-term solution both to congestion and to the global warming, air-pollution, and water quality issues. I just don't believe most people will take busses that are stuck in traffic, and carpooling doesn't help that much.

The Union Bay Bridge is not designed with transit in mind, and thus I fear that the apparent benefit to transit would prove elusive, and we would be stuck with a monster bridge designed to dump more cars in the already congested UW/University hospital-Montlake corridor. Instead of encouraging people to take transit, we would be making it easier for people to commute by car to the UW. While I would love to be able to avoid the 520 glut as a Seattle resident trying to go north/south across the Montlake Bridge, I don't trust the Pacific Interchange to be a long-term solution. Bigger roads fill up with more cars (Stuck in Traffic by Tony Downs is as true today as it was in 1992); the population is not going down. This is just a slow step toward building the RH Thompson expressway.

I-0366-001

Comment Summary:

Pacific Street Interchange Option

Response:

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

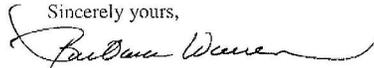
I-0366-001

The Union Bay fantasy bridge is also too high/steep for most bicyclists and I personally would find the high bridge intimidating, as would many other acrophobic drivers.

Finally, on aesthetic grounds alone, I object to the Pacific Interchange. Views of mountains and water for pedestrians are irreplaceable and will become more and more important as Seattle grows. If there has to be some kind of new bridge, I'd rather it be for mass transit alone, specifically designed for it, than be of the scale necessary for automobiles contributing polluted storm water to the only outlet for salmon from the Lake Washington basin. Yes, the pollution will be improved with any of the replacements, but WSDOT's stormwater control has got a long way to go.

I am willing to pay extra money when projects are worth the long term cost, but this idea, even though it was generated by well-meaning citizens, is not worth the extra cost and the money would be better spent on other transportation priorities. Finally, I fear the unpopularity of the Pacific Interchange, except for two community groups in Seattle, could jeopardize support for the Transit/Road funding package that is proposed for November of 2007.

Sincerely yours,



Barbara Warren